GEOFFREY PARKER

IMPRUDENT KING

A NEW LIFE OF PHILIP II

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Dedicated to Sir John Elliott

Contents

List of illustrations ix
Conventions xiii
Preface xiv

Part I. The threshold of power

1 Apprenticeship, 1527–1543 3
2 A Renaissance prince, 1543–1551 26
3 The changing face of empire, 1551–1558 41

Part II. The king and his world

4 The king at work 61
5 The king and God 80
6 The king at play 100

Part III. The first decade of the reign

7 Getting a grip, 1558–1561 121
8 'I would rather lose a hundred thousand lives if I had them': keeping the faith, 1562–1567 140
9 Family life – and death 156
10 The enigma of Don Carlos 175

Part IV: The king victorious

11 Years of crusade, 1568–1572 195
12 Years of adversity, 1573–1576 213
13 The crisis of the reign, 1576–1577 228
14 Murder most foul? 247
15 Years of triumph, 1578–1585 264
16 'The most potent monarch in Christendom' 282

PART V: THE KING VANQUISHED

17 The 'Enterprise of England', 1585–1588 305
18 Philip at bay, 1589–1592 324
19 Towards the tomb – and beyond, 1593–1603 341
Epilogue 363

Abbreviations 376
Note on sources 380
Notes 386
Bibliography 414
Acknowledgements 424
Index 428

Illustrations

Plates

1. Proposed frontispiece for Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas, *General history of the world in the age of Philip II, the Prudent*, 1599. AHN *Consejos* 4416/101.
2. Antonio de Honcala, Philip as a baby and as a boy, 1546. Antonio de Honcala, *Pentaplon christianae pietatis* (Alcalá de Henares, 1546): Library of the University of Granada, A-029-170.
3. Jan Vermeyen, Charles V watches 'a cane game' with his wife and family, 1539. Jan Cornelius Vermeyen, 'Carolus Quintus imperator, rex, charissime conjugi Isabella auguste gravide in agro Toletani'. Photographic Survey, The Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Private collection.
4. Philip defaces his books, 1540–1. *Emblemata et instrumenta bellica* and *Crónica del sancto rey don Fernando tercero*, Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de el Escorial, Y-II-21 fo 3v. and 29-V-7, fo. V.
5. Philip writes to his aunt, Mary of Hungary, December 1544. HHStA Belgien P.A. 60 Konvolut 4 fo. 132v, Philip to Mary of Hungary, 12 Dec. 1544.
6. A joust in a city square, c. 1549. Miniature from *Les heures de Notre Dame*, Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, MS II, 158, fol. 6v.
7. Image of Triumphal Arch erected to welcome Philip to Antwerp, 1549. Cornelius Schryver, *Spectaculorum in susceptione Philippi* (Antwerp, 1550), 53r, 'Arcus Publicus, ad Divi Michaelis'.
8. Jacques le Boucq, Charles V, 1555. Bibliothèque Municipale, Arras, France, Ms 266/72.
9. Anthonis Mor, Philip, victor of St Quentin, c. 1560. Patrimonio Nacional: Monasterio de San Lorenzo de el Escorial.

10. and 11. Philip corrects his paperwork, 1576. © The British Library Board. All rights reserved (BL *Addl.* 28,357/136); HSA *Altamira* 1/III/22, courtesy of The Hispanic Society of America, New York.
12. Marco Vercellio, Philip grants an audience to Leonardo Donà, ambassador of the Venetian Republic, c. 1600. Pinacoteca, Palazzo Donà dalle Rose, Venice.
13. Pierre Perret, frontispiece of Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *History of Philip II, king of Spain*, 1619. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.
14. Reliquaries at the Escorial. Patrimonio Nacional: Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.
15. and 16. The first and second title pages of the 'Royal Bible'. *Biblia Sacra Hebraice, Chaldaice, Graece & Latine* (8 vols, Antwerp, 1569–73), vol. I. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.
17. Wouter Crabeth, The King's Window, at St John's church, Gouda, 1557–9. Sint Janskerk, Gouda, Holland.
18. Hieronymus Wierix, Christ invests Philip with the insignia of kingship, 1585. BRB, Cabinet des Estampes, A.1511.
19. Sofonisba Anguissola, Philip surprised with his rosary, c. 1575. Museo del Prado. White Images / Scala, Florence.
20. Philip corrects the plans of his architects, 1561–2. AGS *MPD* XL-1.
21. Fabrizio Castello, 'The king of Spain's Howse', 1576. Hatfield House, England.
22. Pompeo Leoni, the funeral effigies of Philip and his family at the Escorial, 1597–1600. Patrimonio Nacional: Basilica del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de el Escorial.
23. Philip excises an offending passage from a document about the Escorial, 1571. AGS *CC* 409/26.
24. Jehan Lhermite, 'The philosopher's tower' and the distillery at the Escorial, c. 1600. BRB Ms II.1028: Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*, in *Revue d'histoire de la pharmacie*, 1933, vol. 21, issue 84, p. 207.
25. Hans de Evalo, a clock from Philip's office, 1583. Patrimonio Nacional, Colecciones Reales, El Candil.
26. Philip answers under oath the questions posed by Archbishop Carranza, 1560. RAH Ms. 9/1804, Proceso Carranza vol. XII fo. 83v. © Real Academia de Historia, Madrid.
27. Anton van den Wyngaerde, Philip's rooms with a view at the Madrid Alcázar, c. 1565. Anton van den Wyngaerde, 'El Alcázar de Madrid', Österreichisches Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria, Cod. Min. 41.
28. Philip II acts as his own cipher clerk, 1567. AA 5/69, Philip to Alba, 7 August 1567. Archivo de los Duques de Alba.

29. Sofonisba Anguissola, Isabel of France, queen of Spain, 1565. Museo Nacional del Prado.
30. Anonymous, The baptism of Prince Fernando on 16 December 1571. Courtesy of the Khevenhüller Collection at the Burg Hochosterwitz Museum, www.burg-hochosterwitz.com
31. Titian, 'The offering of Philip II', 1572–3. Museo Nacional del Prado.
32. Anonymous, Philip II, his daughters Isabella and Catalina, and Prince Philip, 1583–4. Courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America, New York.
33. Alonso Sánchez Coello, Sor Margarita de la Cruz, 1585. Patrimonio Nacional: Convento de las Descalzas Reales.
34. Philip sentences to death Gabriel de Espinosa, the 'baker of Madrigal' who pretended to be King Sebastian of Portugal, 1595. AGS *Estado* 173/271.
35. Don Carlos orders the Spanish ambassador in Rome to acquire part of the sacred prepuce, 1567. IVdeDJ 38/4.
36. 'Finance for dummies': trying to explain fiscal problems to Philip, 1574. IVdeDJ 76/491.
37. Alonso Sánchez Coello, Philip at his coronation as king of Portugal, 1581 De Agostini Picture Library / G. Costa / Bridgeman Images.
38. Niccolò Granello and Fabrizio Castello, Philip's navy defeats its adversaries off the Azores. Patrimonio Nacional: Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Sala de Batallas.
39. The logo of Philip's Monarchy after the union of crowns: 'The world is not enough'. Museu Numismático Portugués, Lisbon, Inv. 2918.
40. Alonso Sánchez Coello, Philip II, 1587. Galleria Palatina, Pitti Palace, Florence. Photo Scala, Florence courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali.
41. A 'Saturday Statement': Philip tries to balance his cheque book, 1589. AGS *CJH* 219.
42. Jehan Tarazona, 'Journey to Tarazona'. BRB Ms II.1028: Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*.
43. Alonso Sánchez Coello, Philip II, 1588. Patrimonio Nacional: Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.
44. Jehan Lhermite, Philip's 'invalid chair'. BRB Ms II.1028: Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*.
45. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, 'The Vision of Friar Julián de Alcalá', c. 1645. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA / Bridgeman Images.

Figures

page

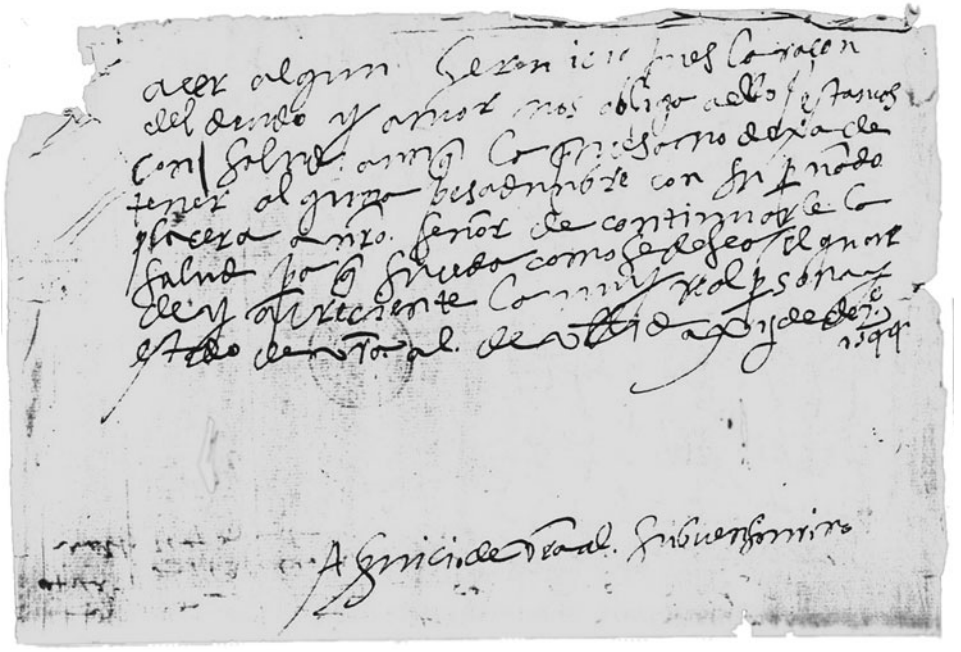
1. The Spanish Monarchy at its apogee, 1585. 5
2. The family of Charles V. 7
3. Books acquired by Philip, 1535–47. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *La 'Librería Rica'*, 55. 17
4. Philip's voyage to the Netherlands in 1548–9 and back in 1550–1. Based on Calvete de Estrella, *El felicíssimo viaje del muy alto y muy poderoso Príncipe don Phelippe* and Gachard, *Voyages des souverains des Pays-Bas,* IV, 4–7. 36
5. Philip's tour through the Netherlands in 1549. Based on Calvete de Estrella, *El felicíssimo viaje*, 'Itinerario breue del príncipe'. 38
6. Executions for heresy by burning in England, 1555–8. Duffy, *Fires of faith*, 129, based on data collected by the John Foxe Project. 48
7. Philip II's Wars. 63
8. The councils of Philip II. 65
9. Philip's country retreats. 107
10. The family of Philip II. 157
11. Don Carlos and his absentee ancestors. 180
12. The limited fertility of Philip II. 181
13. The cost of war on two fronts, 1571–7. 219
14. Requests for copies of documents received by the archive of Simancas, 1548–99. Rodríguez de Diego, 'Un archivo', graph 6. 298

1. Proposed frontispiece for *General history of the world in the age of Philip II, the Prudent*, by Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas, 1599. When Herrera requested permission to publish his *General History* in 1599, he sent a sketch of Philip that combined Classical and Christian virtues – like Hercules, the late king strangles a serpent (heresy), while the symmetry and composure of his body reflects the perfection of God's creation. The title at the top includes the epithet 'the Prudent' for the first time (page xiv).

2. Philip as a baby and as a boy, Antonio de Honcala, 1546. A devotional treatise, dedicated to Philip, used the Greek letter upsilon to show the choice between vice and virtue faced by the prince as he journeys through life. The changing clothes reflect his progress from baby, through infant to young adult and provide the earliest known images of the prince. In one, he holds a song bird on a string (page 11).

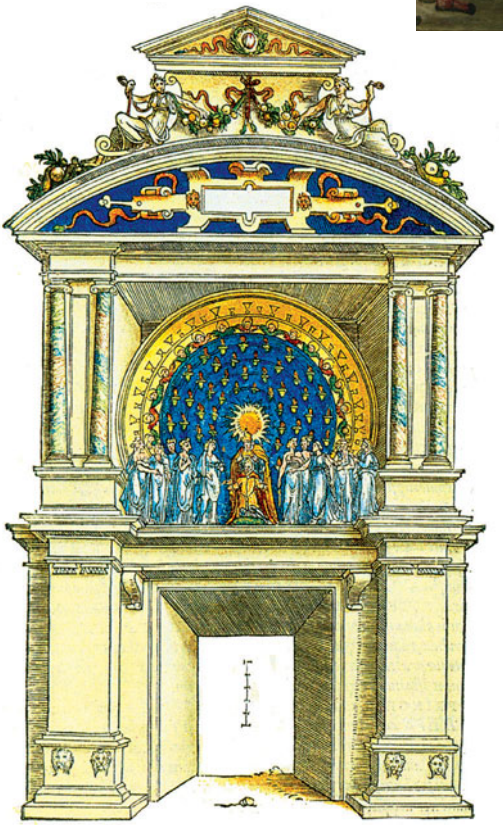
3. Charles V watches 'a cane game' with his wife and family, by Jan Vermeyen, 1539. Philip, almost 12 years old, and his sisters, watch the spectacle intently from the booth second to the left of centre in the arena erected outside Toledo in March 1539 in honour of the empress's pregnancy. Six weeks later she was dead (page 12).

4. Philip defaces his books, 1540–1. At age fourteen, Philip used his pen, brush and paints to doodle in the margins of a chronicle describing the heroic acts of his predecessor, St Fernando, king of Castile (page 18).



5. Philip writes to his aunt, Mary of Hungary, December 1544. At age seventeen, Philip's distinctive spidery script was already recognizable, with some lines overlapping others and heavy abbreviation of many words (such as the last phrase 'de v[uest]ra al[teza], de V[a]ll[adoli]d, a xij de dez[iembr]e 1544': page 28).

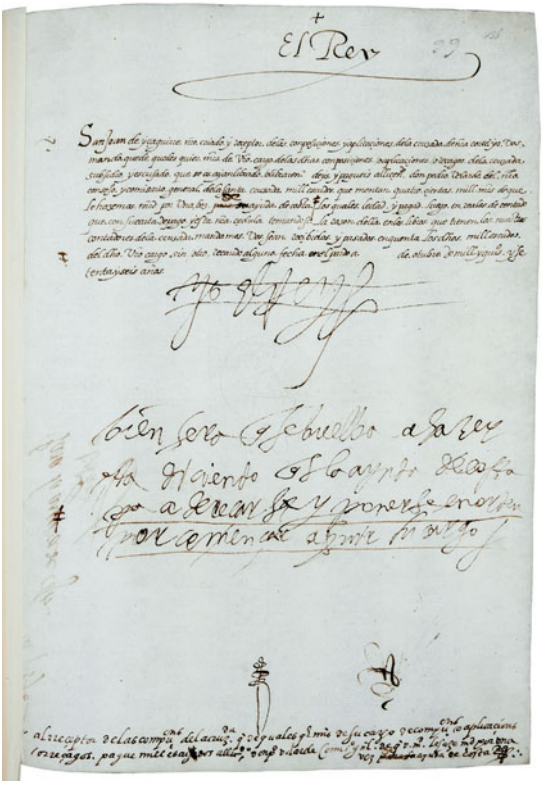
6. A joust in a city square, c. 1549. The furious public joust may well show Prince Philip (with the white plume) in Brussels in May 1549, running against Don Luis de Requesens, whose lance 'knocked him to the ground' stunned. The spectators, like those at a modern bullfight, eagerly awaited any error or mishap as well as any act of unusual courage or cunning (page 35).

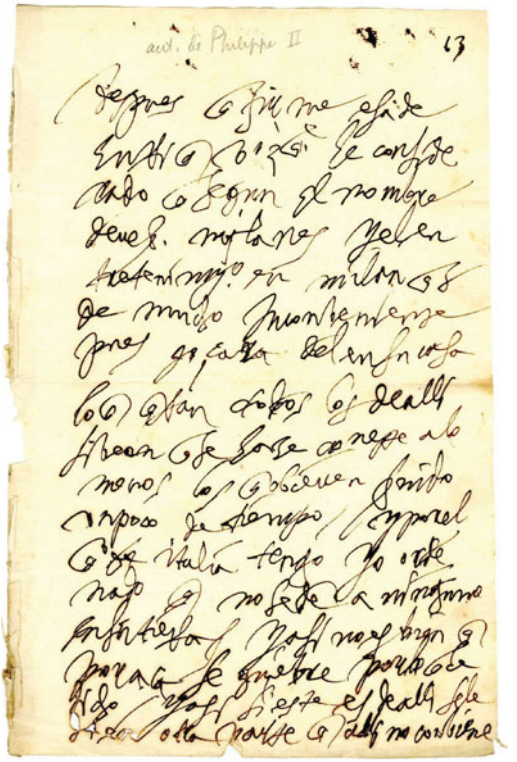


7. Image of the Triumphal Arch erected to welcome Philip to Antwerp, 1549. In the main display, God himself crowns the young prince (page 37).

8. Charles V, by Jacques le Boucq, 1555. Le Boucq, a herald of the Order of Golden Fleece, attended the last chapter of the Order at which Charles V presided – one of the few occasions in 1555 when the emperor appeared in public – and probably made this striking sketch immediately afterwards (page 49).

9. Philip, victor of St Quentin, by Anthonis Mor, c. 1560. The king holds his general's baton and wears the full armour, decorated with the cross of Burgundy and an image of the Virgin Mary, which he wore while storming St Quentin in 1557. This served for over a decade as an 'official portrait' from which numerous copies were made (page 53).





10 and 11. Philip corrects his paperwork, 1576. One day in 1576, after the king had affixed his *estampilla* (the equivalent of a rubber stamp) to a routine order to reimburse 1,000 escudos to an official, he noticed that the reason for the payment had been omitted. He therefore crossed out his signature, wrote out the phrase to be added, and returned it to the secretary for revision. Perhaps more remarkable, after signing a warrant that authorized a reward in Milan to Enrique Visconti, 'it occurred to me that, judging by his name, he's Milanese' and 'if we do that for him, everyone there will want the same'. The king therefore instructed that 'If he is from there, he should receive a reward somewhere else.' Hundreds of documents like this required the king's signature every week – sometimes every day – and it seems astonishing that he managed to spot such errors and ambiguities (page 66).

12. Philip grants an audience to Leonardo Donà, ambassador of the Venetian Republic, by Marco Vecellio, c. 1600. Donà became Venetian ambassador in Spain in 1570, at the age of 33, and served for over three years. According to court protocol, Philip stands while he listens to the ambassador (who commissioned this picture); but Donà, who subsequently wrote down the king's every word, rarely received more than a non-committal sentence in reply – perhaps because, on his own admission, Philip tended to tune out during audiences (page 78).

13. Frontispiece of Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *History of Philip II, king of Spain*, by Pierre Perret, 1619. The author, who attended on the king from 1575 and saw him frequently, placed El Escorial in the background of the confrontation between Philip, in armour and with sword drawn to protect the Virgin Mary, and the enemies of the Catholic church. A motto stating that 'The first priority is religion' separates the protagonists (page 80).

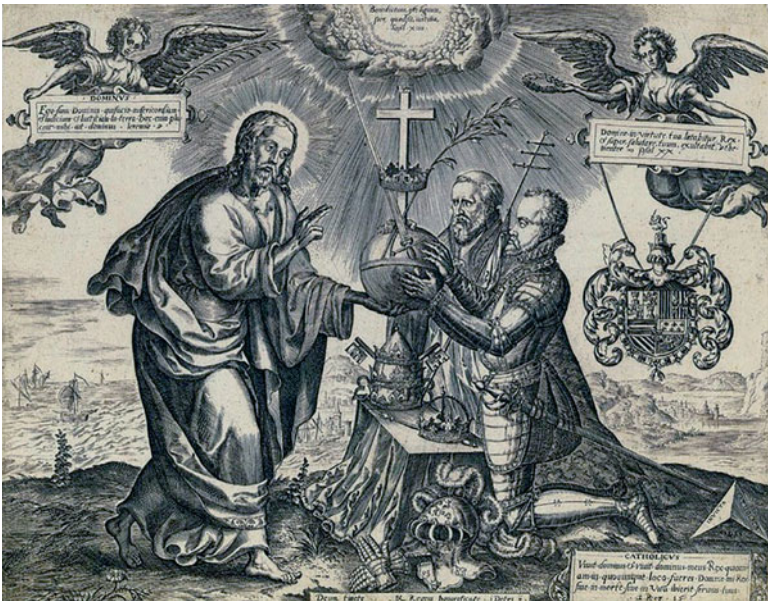
14. Reliquaries at the Escorial, containing some relics from Philip II's collection. The 'keeper of relics' at the Escorial claimed that the royal collection included at least a fragment of the bones of every known saint except three. Although only a fraction of the original collection has survived, the golden caskets containing various certified body parts of the saints remain (page 84).

15 and 16. The first and second title pages of the 'Royal Bible'. The magnificent *Biblia Regia*, printed at Antwerp under the king's direction in 1569, began by proclaiming Philip's desire to produce

STETITQVE REX SVPER GRADVM, ET FOEDVS PERCVSSIT CORAM DOMINO, VT AMBVLARENT POST DOMINVM; ET CVSTODIRENT PRAECEPTA EIVS, ET SVSCITARENT VERBA FOEDERIS HVIVS, QVAE SCRIPTA ERANT IN LIBRO ILLO. 4. REG. 23.
PIETAS REGIA
PHILIPPO II. HISPANIAR. REGI CATHOLICO, QVOD RELIGIONEM EXPIANDAM, PIETATEMQ. INSTAVRANDA CVRAVERIT PIVS.
OB DELETOS ARVSPICES BAAL. 4. REG. 22.
OB TEMPLI SARTATECTA CVRATA. 4. REG. 22.

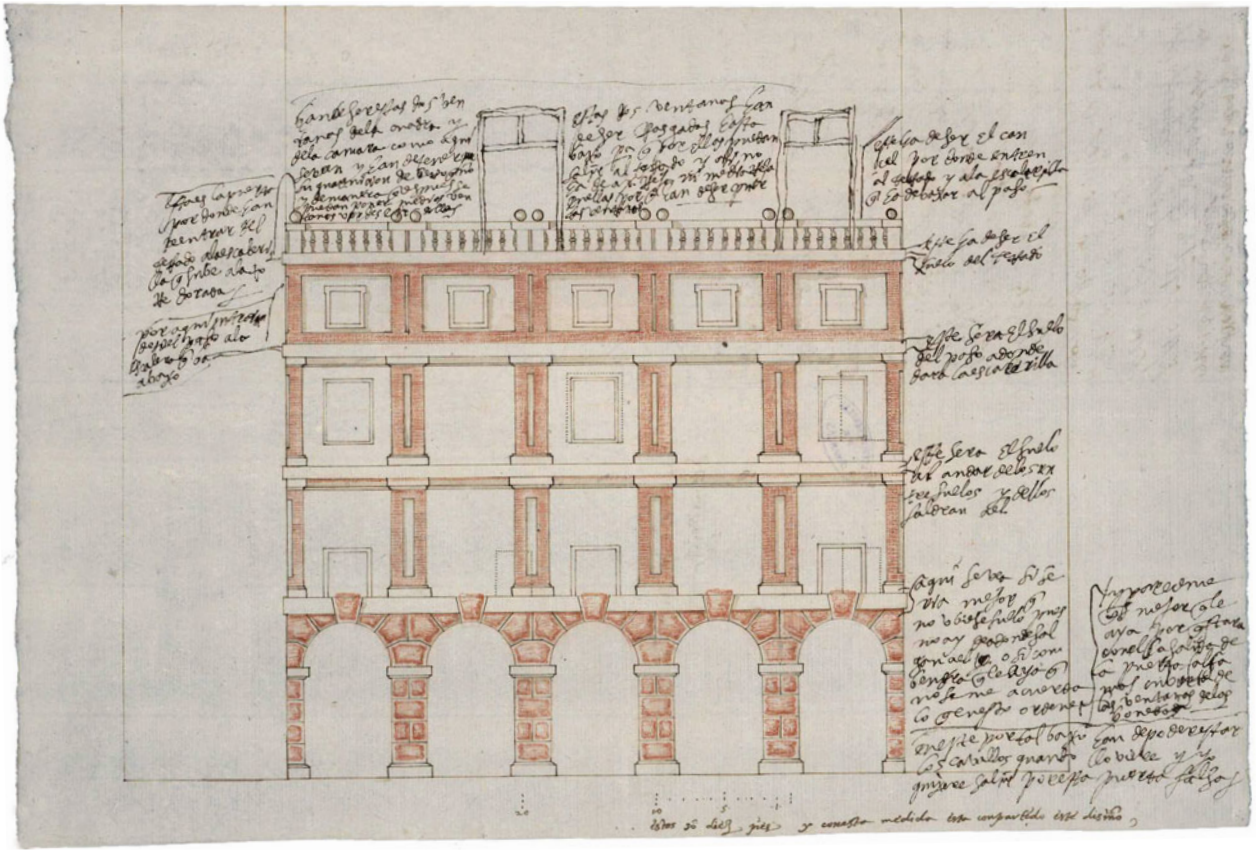
Scripture that *all* Christians – Protestant and Orthodox, as well as Catholic – could accept as definitive (page 88).

17. The King's Window celebrating the victory of St Quentin, St John's church, Gouda, by Wouter Crabeth, 1557–9. When the church of St John in Gouda was rebuilt after a fire, local artists created a spectacular series of stained glass windows, each between 10 and 20 metres high. In the central register of 'the King's Window', Philip and Mary Tudor observe the Last Supper. The accuracy of the king's likeness suggests that Wouter Crabeth, the glass engraver who supervised this massive operation, may have sketched him 'from life' (page 93).

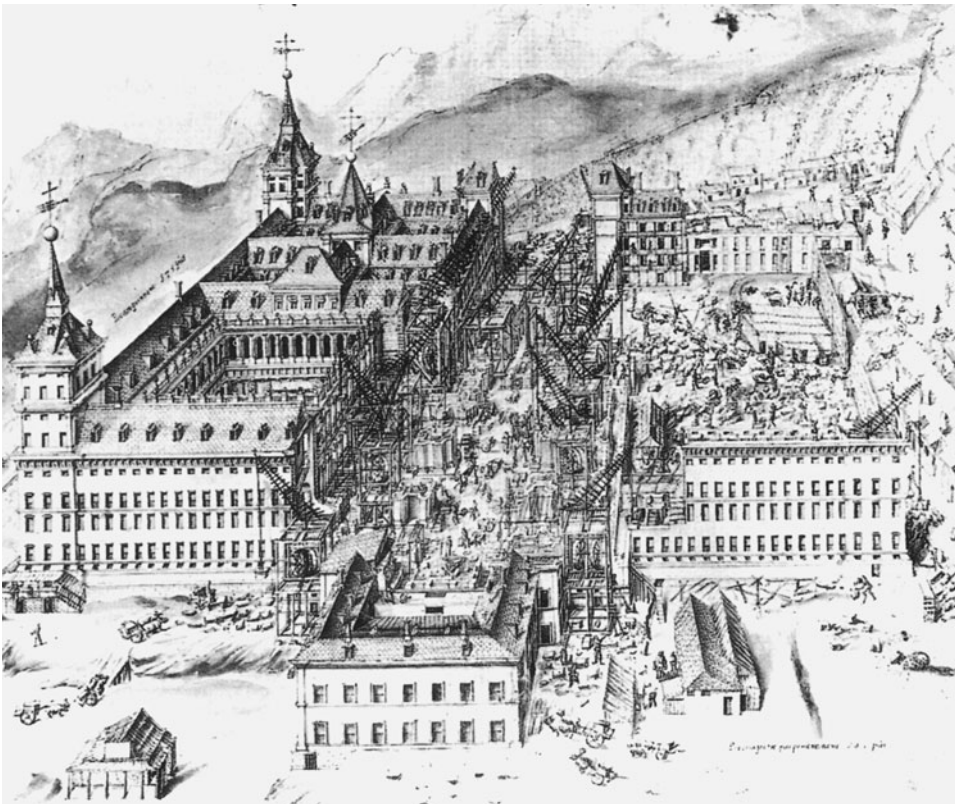


18. Christ invests Philip with the insignia of kingship, by Hieronymus Wierix, 1585. In this triumphalist Netherlands engraving, Jesus blesses Philip as He hands him an oversize globe, together with sword, olive branch, crown and cross. Angels prepare palms and laurels of victory while the pope, ignored by everyone, looks on malevolently (page 96).

19. Philip surprised with his rosary, by Sofonisba Anguissola, c. 1575. Radiography shows that when Sofonisba painted the original of this royal portrait in 1564, the king had his hand on his sword. A decade later she completely changed it, substituting a rosary for the sword (page 96).

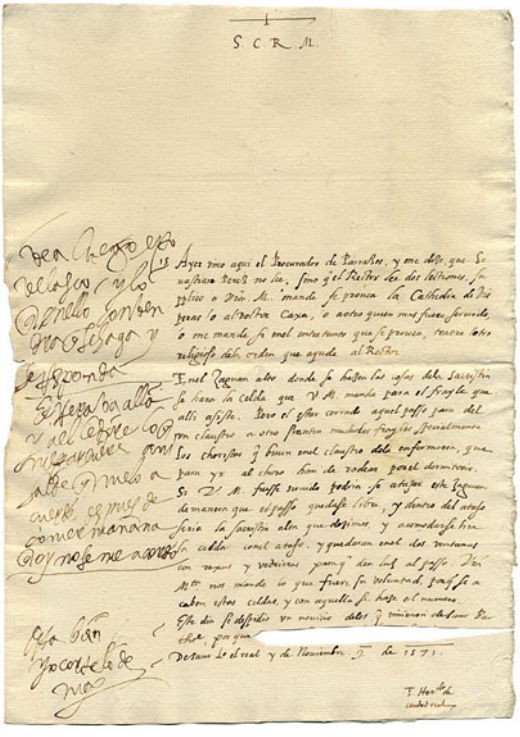


20. Philip corrects the plans of his architects, 1561–2. The king had a clear idea of what he wanted, in architecture as in other things – in this case an additional floor in the Madrid Alcázar – and did not hesitate to convey his views in both words and drawings (page 102).

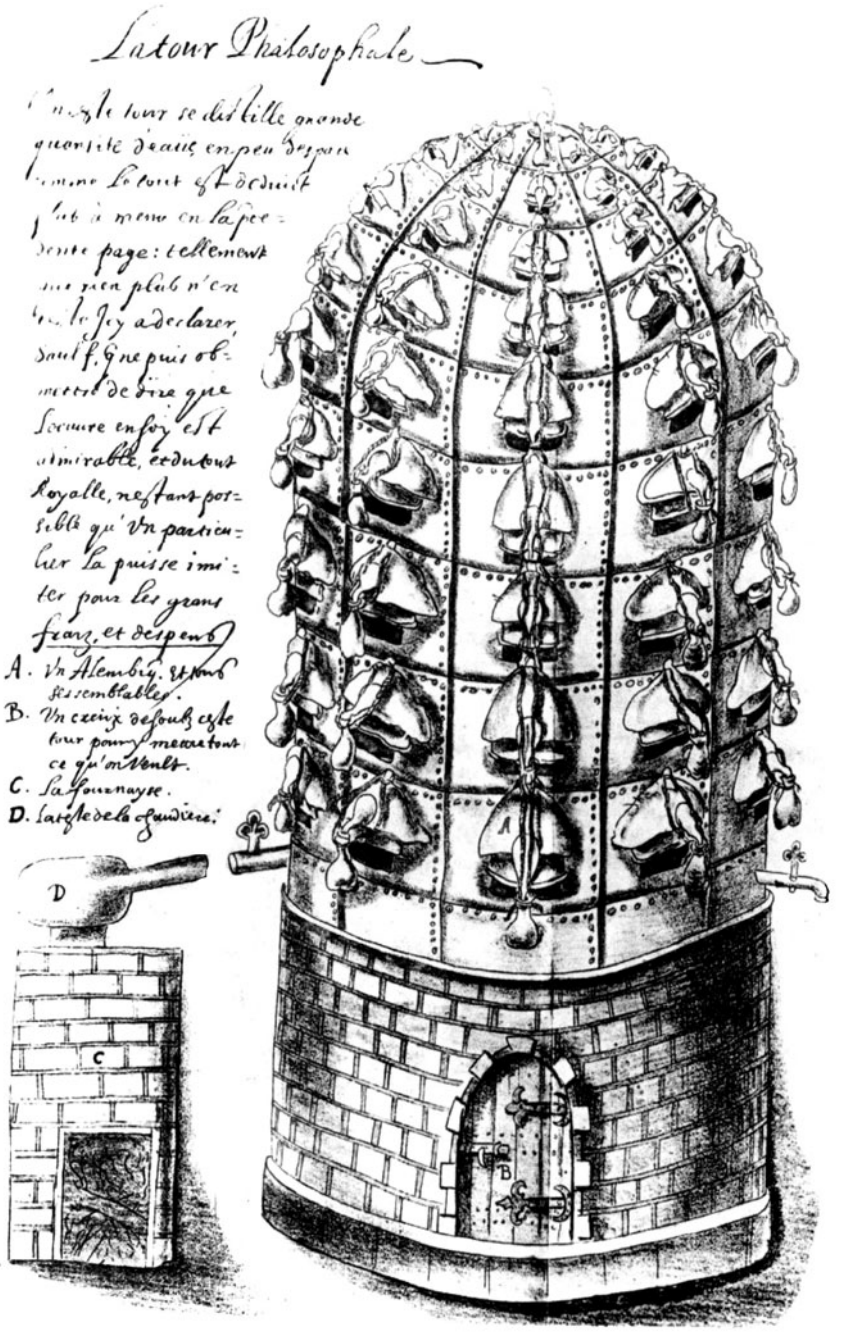


21. 'The king of Spain's Howse', by Fabrizio Castello, 1576. A detailed drawing of the progress of construction at the Escorial shows the south wing of the convent and the royal apartments largely complete while cranes help to erect the Basilica and the library. The temporary accommodation for the labour force is on the right (page 105).

22. The funeral effigies of Philip and his family at the Escorial, by Pompeo Leoni, 1597–1600. Although Philip died before Leoni installed these huge bronze statues to the left of the main altar, he approved the design and therefore the decision to portray him as aged, bald and weary (though resplendent in the suit of armour he had worn on campaign forty years before). His fourth wife Anne kneels beside him, with her predecessors María Manuela and Isabel behind, while Don Carlos looks over the king's shoulder – at last the loyal son for whom Philip had yearned (page 106).

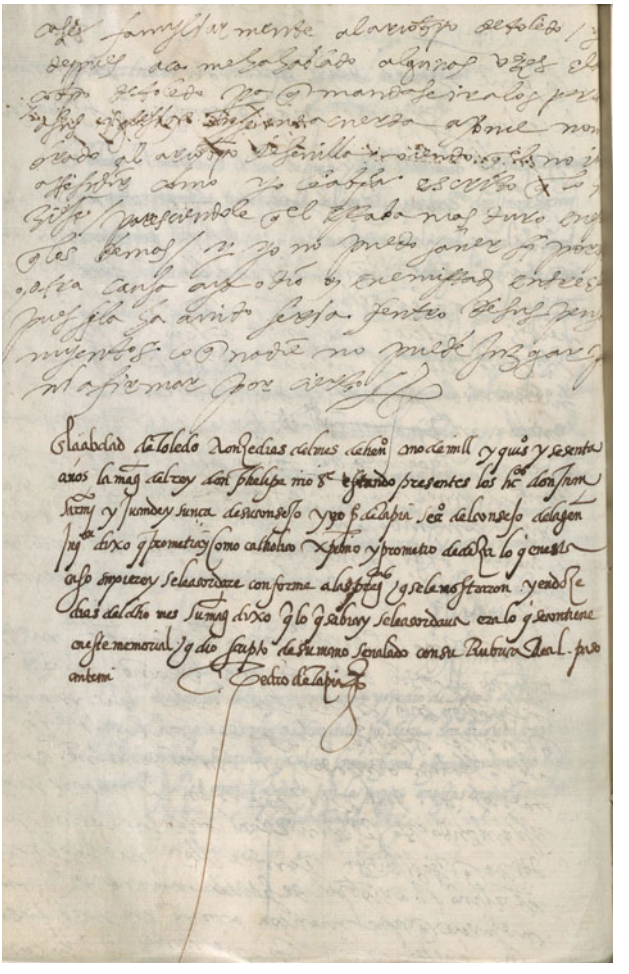


23. Philip excises an offending passage from a document about the Escorial, 1571. Something he read led Philip to reach for a pair of scissors and excise half a sentence in this letter. To clarify what he had just done, before returning the defaced document to his secretary the king wrote in the margin 'Está bien. Yo corté lo demás [This is fine: I cut out the rest]' (page 107).

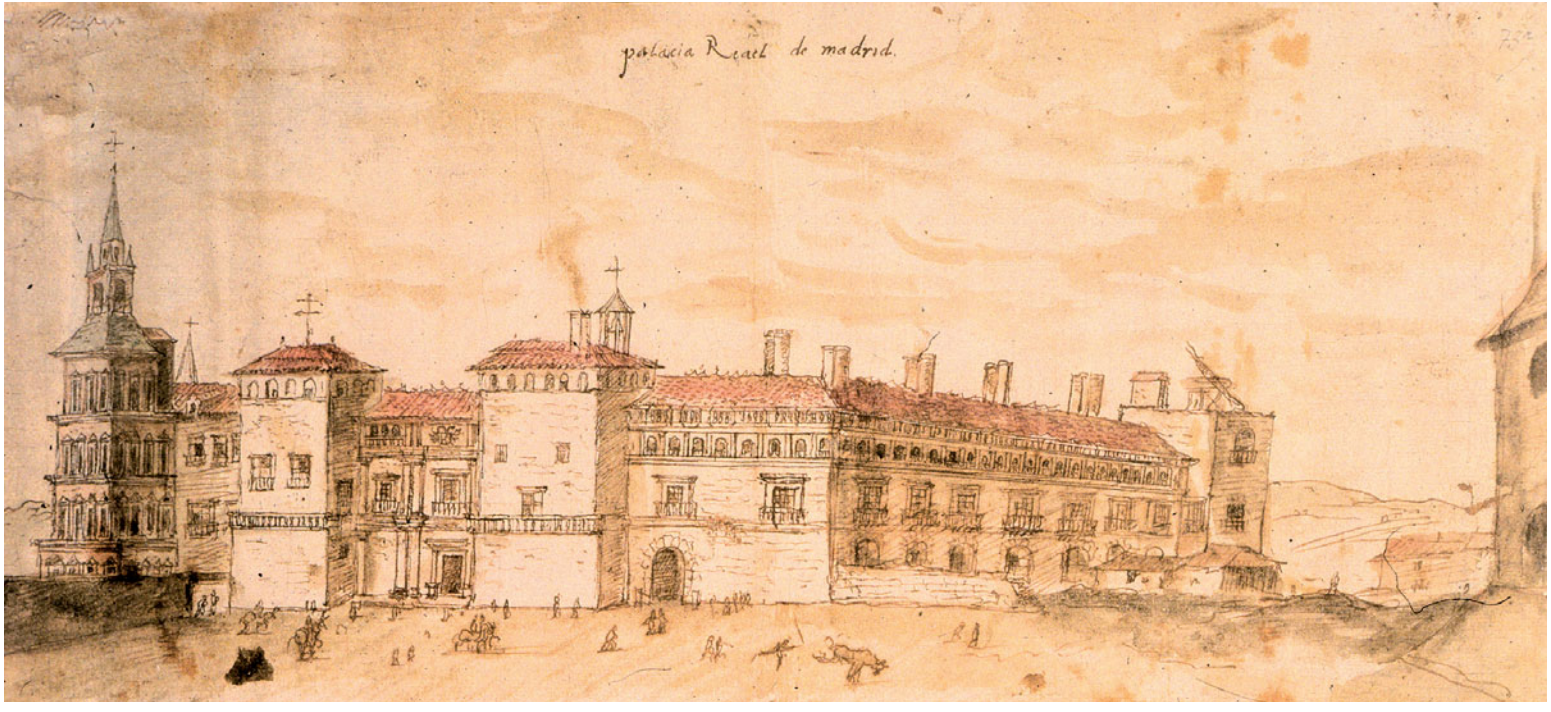


24. 'The philosopher's tower' and the distillery at the Escorial, by Jehan Lhermite, c. 1600. Throughout his life, Philip showed great interest in alchemy and he filled a suite of eleven rooms at the Escorial with distilling equipment, including a tower made of tin some seven metres high, which stood on a brick oven. Experts affixed numerous glass receptacles to collect the 'essence' of special herbs (grown in the royal gardens) released as the tower heated up. According to Jehan Lhermite, the tower distilled about 10 kilos of 'essence' every day, which the experts then used to produce chemical compounds (page 110).

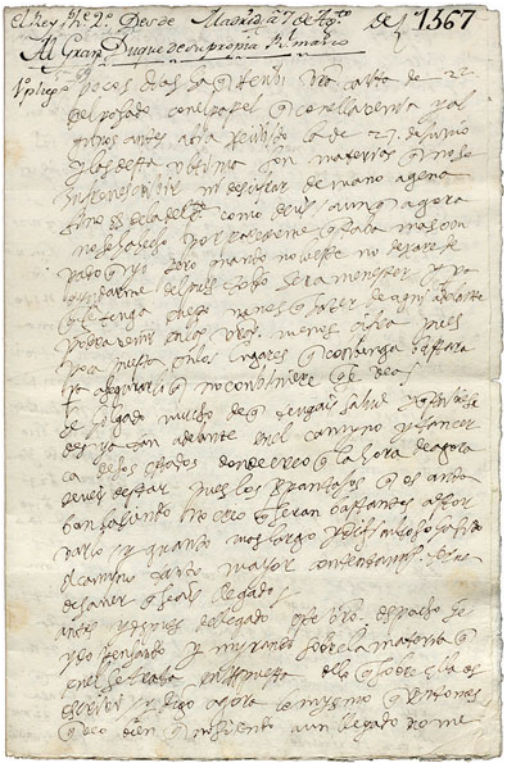
25. One of the clocks in Philip's office, by Hans de Evalo, 1583. According to his valet, Jehan Lhermite, Philip always had two clocks in his office, each one illuminated by an oil lamp, which 'gave an unusual and powerful impression' to all who visited the king. The clocks 'regulated and measured his life, dividing it by the minute, determining his daily actions and occupations'. This timepiece, made by Philip's Dutch clockmaker Hans de Evalo, is still on display in the royal apartments at the Escorial (page 114).

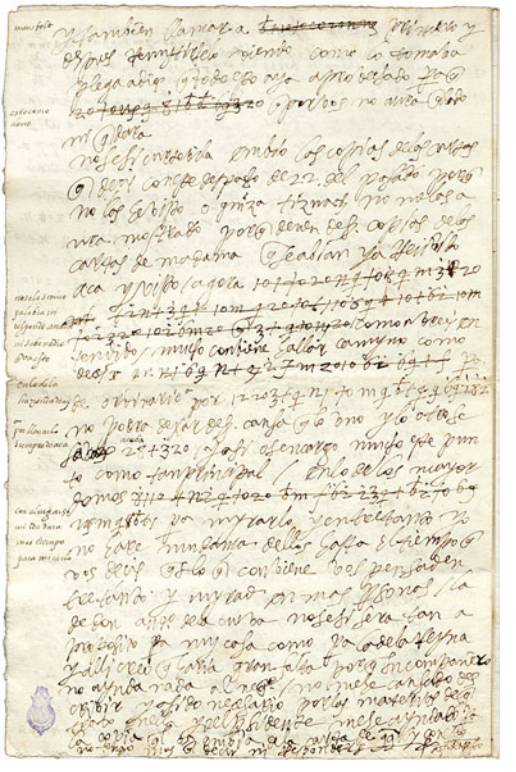


26. Philip answers under oath the questions posed by Archbishop Carranza, 1560. The king wrote out answers to each of Carranza's questions regarding his relations with Inquisitor-General Valdés. Then on 12 January 1560, the secretary of the council of the Inquisition, Pedro de Tapia, certified that the king had 'promised as a Catholic' to tell everything he knew, and that his testimony 'was written in his hand and authenticated with his royal rubric' (the 'J' at the end of his deposition). This probably marked the first interrogation that Philip endured since his father grilled him about his sex life in 1543 (page 134).



27. Philip's rooms with a view at the Madrid Alcázar, by Anton van den Wyngaerde, c. 1565. Philip made Madrid his capital in 1561 and work began almost at once to expand its Alcázar, especially the 'Gilded tower' (on the far left), with three high-windowed floors beneath a pointed slate roof in the Flemish style. The king worked and held audiences in a suite of rooms that overlooked the Casa de Campo, while his ministers toiled in their offices below (page 136).



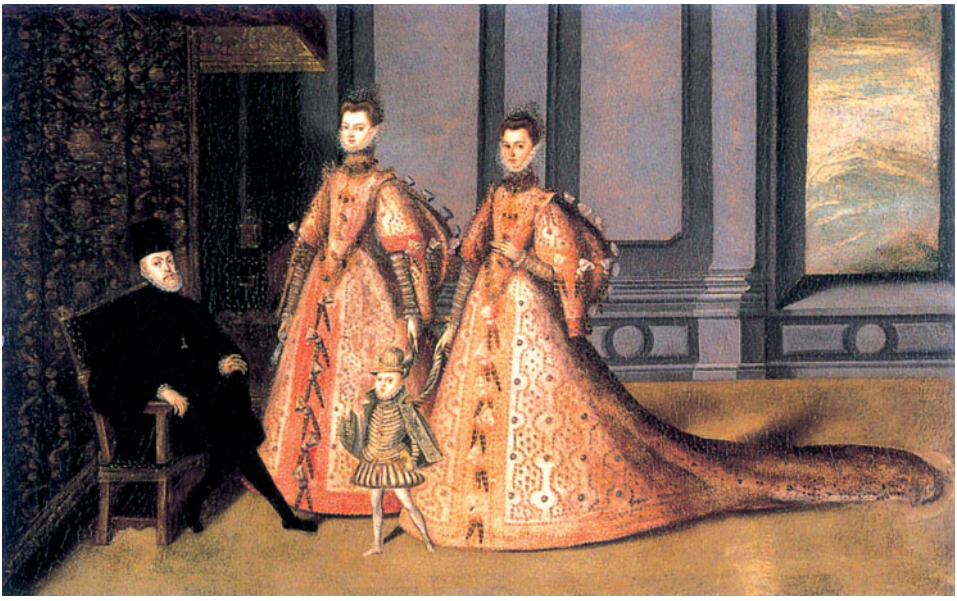


28. Philip II acts as his own cipher clerk, 1567. The king's holograph letter to the duke of Alba on 7 August 1567 began just like other similar letters: verbose, rambling and untidy. Then Philip started to encode his thoughts – although he soon revealed his unfamiliarity with the elementary rules of cryptography: he enciphered only crucial words rather than whole passages, and entered the symbol for each character of every word rather than using additional symbols to represent frequent combinations (page 151).

29. Isabel of France, queen of Spain, by Sofonisba Anguissola, 1565. The queen, aged 20, posed for this portrait just before she left Spain to meet her mother at Bayonne. Perhaps to emphasize her role as the king's representative, she holds a miniature of Philip – probably based on Antonis Mor's 'St Quentin' portrait (plate 9; page 156).

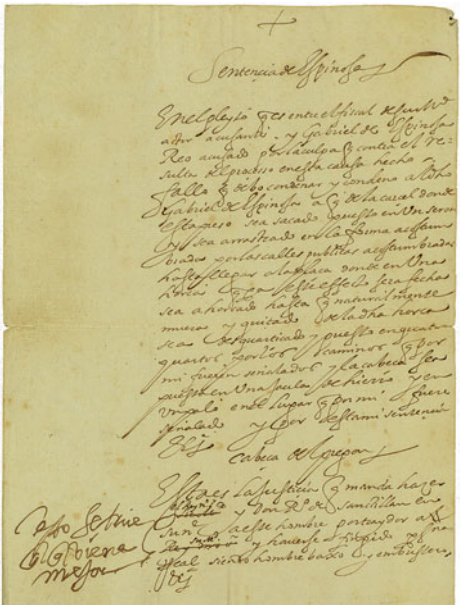
30. The baptism of Prince Fernando on 16 December 1571, anonymous. A procession of courtiers and ambassadors escort Prince Fernando from the Madrid Alcázar into the church of San Gil to be baptized by Cardinal Espinosa (in red, upper left). The painting was commissioned by Imperial Ambassador Hans Khevenhüller (18), standing right behind the infant. The painting includes images of other prominent members of Philip's Court, including French Ambassador Fourquevaux (19), Portuguese ambassador Pereira (20), the marquis of Ladrada (23), Princess Juana (24) and Archduke Wenceslas (25) (page 165).

31. 'The offering of Philip II', by Titian, 1572–3. At the king's command, Alonso Sánchez Coello sent a portrait of Philip as a model for Titian to use, and he may also have sent a sketch to suggest juxtaposing the birth of Prince Fernando (to whom a rather clumsy angel offers an olive branch, and promises 'More for you'), with the defeat of the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto (seen through the window, and symbolized by the bound Turk in the foreground) (page 165).

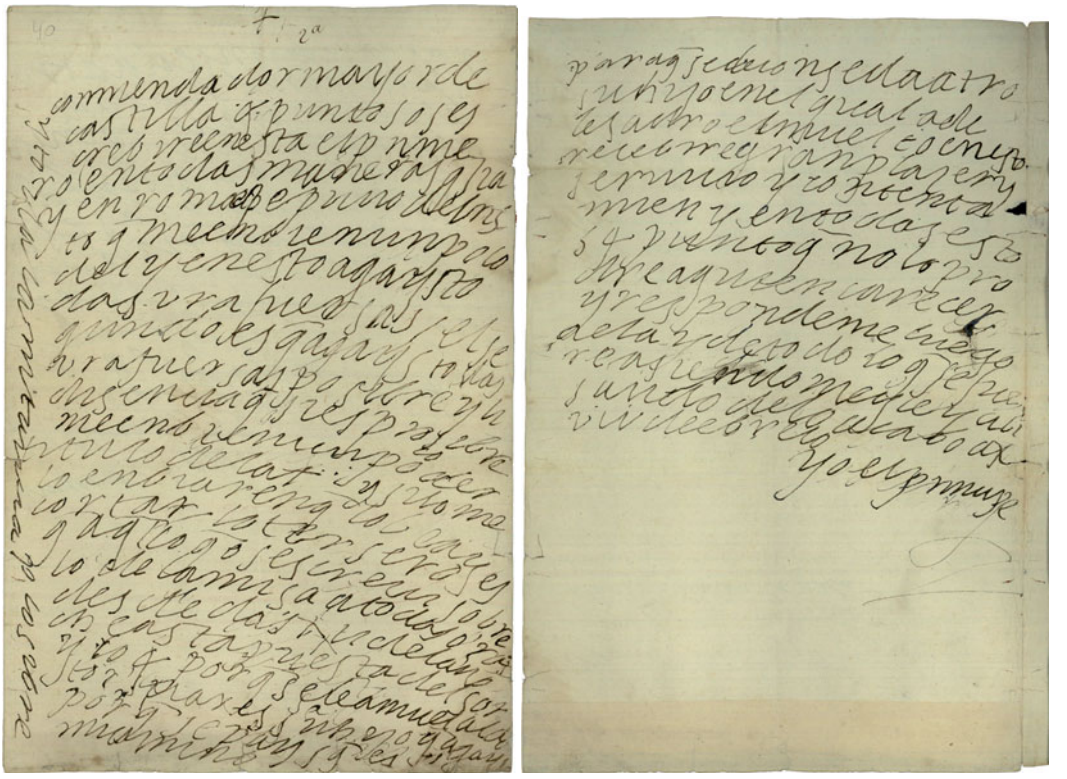


32. Philip II, his daughters Isabella and Catalina, and Prince Philip, anonymous, 1583–4. This intimate (if unbalanced) family portrait of Philip and his surviving family was done after Prince Philip became a knight of the Golden Fleece (whose insignia he wears) in 1583 and before Catalina left the family circle for ever with her husband, the duke of Savoy, in 1585 (page 168).

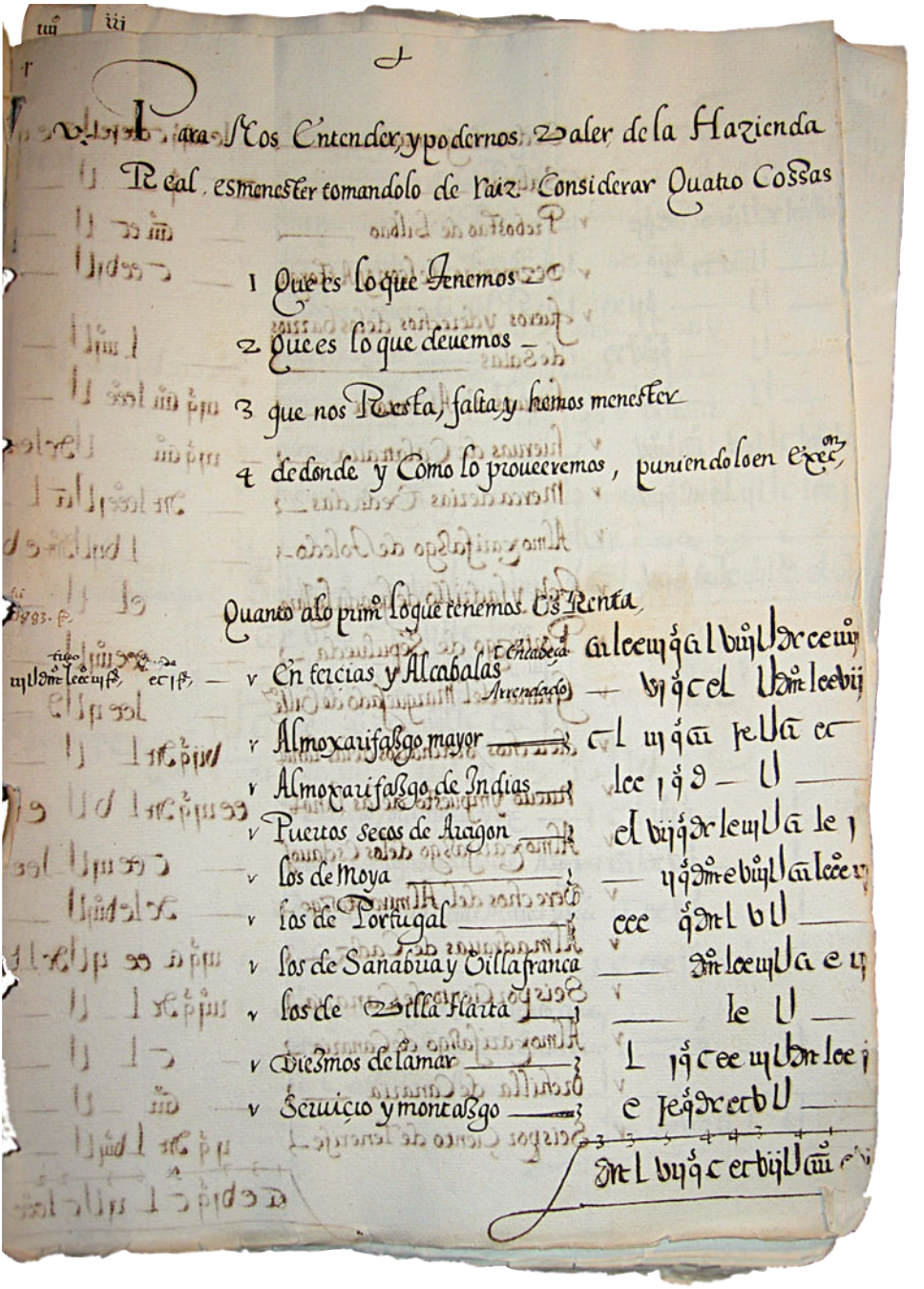
33. Sor Margarita de la Cruz, by Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1585. Having rejected Philip's offer of marriage, his niece Margarita entered the convent of Las Descalzas Reales in 1585 and spent the remaining 48 years of her life as a Franciscan nun close to her mother, Empress María, who lived in a special royal apartment there until her death in 1603 (page 171).



34. Philip sentences to death Gabriel de Espinosa, the 'baker of Madrigal' who pretended to be King Sebastian of Portugal, 1595. When Philip first read the death sentence, he appears to have ordered a secretary to reverse 'His Majesty' and 'the king our lord', but then wrote in the margin in his own hand 'Change this: it's better this way' – one more example of the 'trivia' that consumed so much of the king's time and energy (page 173).



35. Don Carlos orders the Spanish ambassador in Rome to acquire part of the sacred prepuce, 1567. Even at age 22, the handwriting of Don Carlos was not only virtually illegible (which might simply reflect the consequences of forcing someone left-handed to write with his right hand) but also virtually illiterate: a worrying characteristic for the heir to a global empire (page 191).

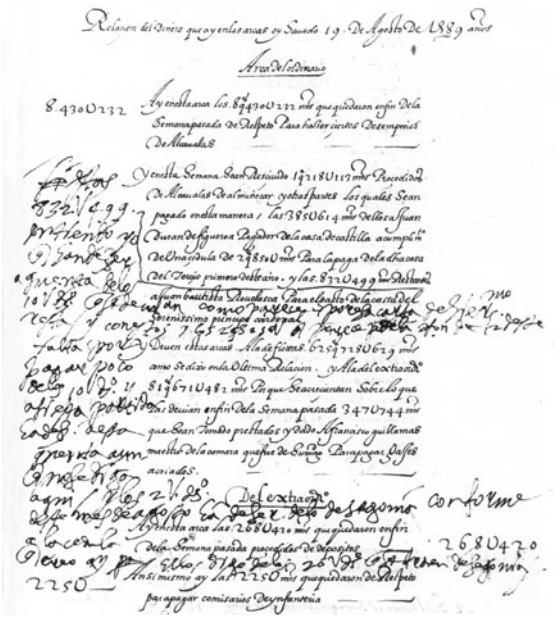

Para Nos Entender y poder nos valer de la Hazienda
Real, es menester tomandolo de Raiz Considerar Quatro Cossas
1 Que es lo que Tenemos
2 Que es lo que deuemos
3 que nos Resta, falta y hemos menester
4 de donde y Como lo prouueremos, puniendo loen execu
Quanto a lo prim lo que tenemos es Renta
En tercias y Alcabalas
Almoxarifazgo mayor
Almoxarifazgo de Indias
Puertos secos de Aragon
los de Moya
los de Portugal
los de Sanabria y Villafranca
los de Villa Flarta
Diezmos de la mar
Seruicio y montazgo

37. Philip at his coronation as king of Portugal, by Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1581. Although he governed a global empire, Philip only took part in one coronation ceremony: at Tomar as king of Portugal in 1581. According to a courtier, 'clothed in brocade, with the sceptre in his hand' he looked like King David (page 271).

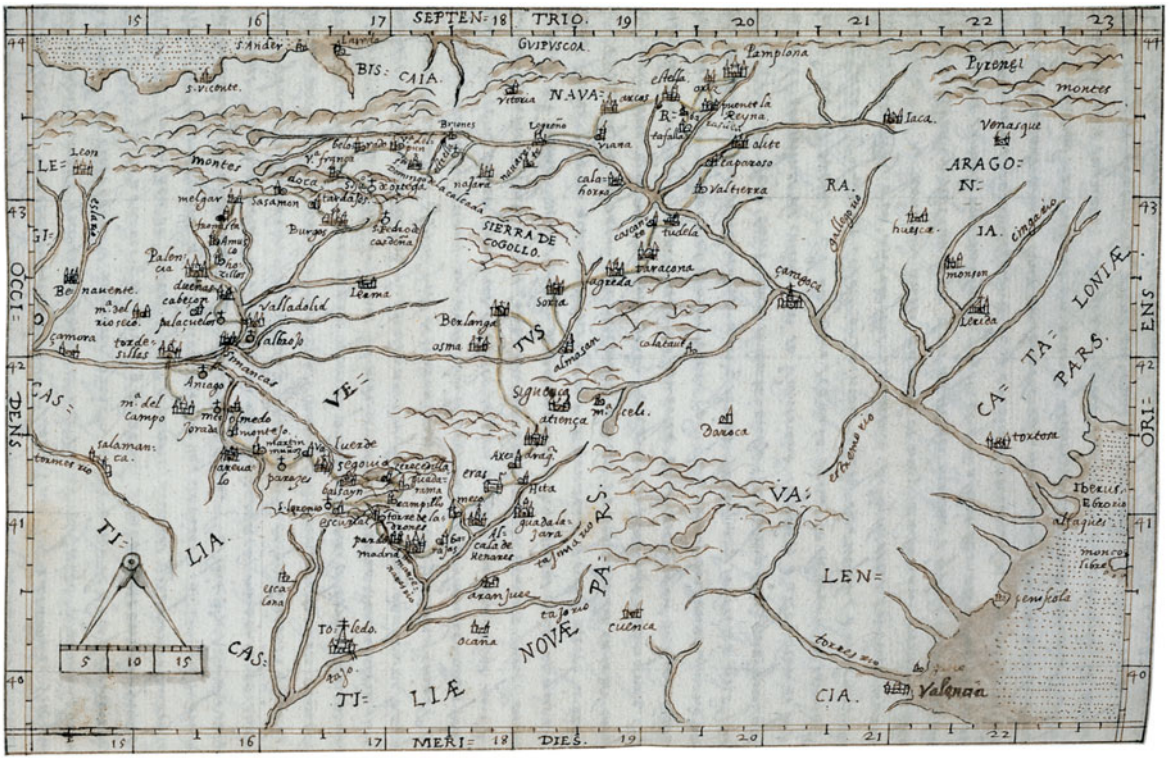
38. Philip's navy defeats its adversaries off the Azores, by Niccolò Granello and Fabrizio Castello. The frescoes commissioned for the Hall of Battles at the Escorial included a view of prisoners taken by the Spanish fleet in a battle off the island of São Miguel in 1582, bound back to back as their captors prepare to execute them by drowning. They also depicted the shot damage inflicted on the victorious fleet, including its flagship (both in this battle and in the Armada campaign six years later): the *San Martín* (page 276).

39. The logo of Philip's Monarchy after the union of crowns: 'The world is not enough'. This medal of gilded bronze, probably cast in 1583, celebrated the successful annexation of Portugal with a phrase used by the Roman poet Juvenal about Alexander the Great – NON SUFFICIT ORBIS – and placed Bucephalus, the horse that only Alexander could ride, atop the globe. The 'cloud' that separates the word SUFFICIT represents God and reminds viewers that even world conquerors have limitations (page 276).

40. Philip II, by Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1587. Formal portraits of the king in later years normally portrayed him dressed simply in black, conveying his majesty not through the outward symbols of kingship but through dignity and 'serenity'. His only ornament here is the insignia of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Sánchez Coello intended this understated portrait of his master, then aged 60, to go to Pope Sixtus V, but Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany opened the package and refused to part with its contents (page 295).

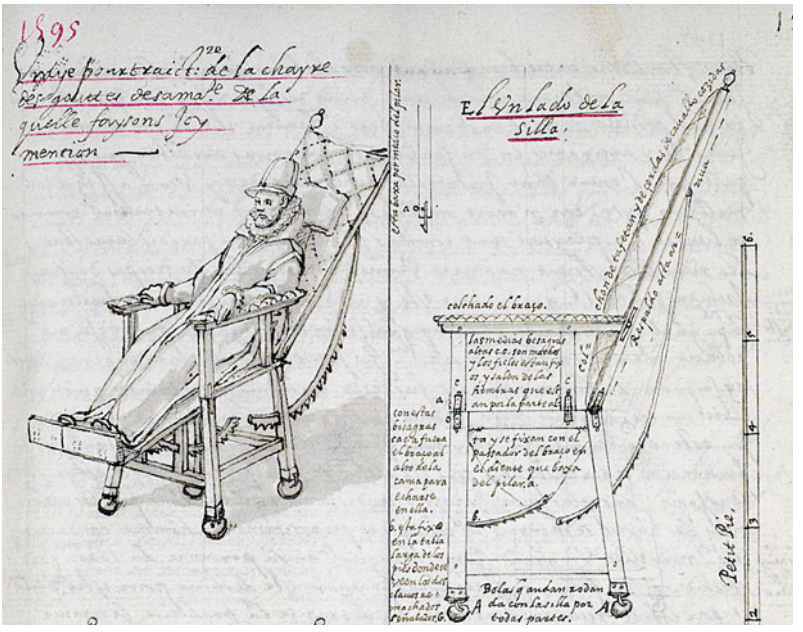


41. A 'Saturday Statement': Philip tries to balance his cheque book, 1589. The cost of the Armada placed such a strain on the royal treasury that Philip demanded a statement from his treasury every Saturday, stating the amount of cash in hand and the outstanding obligations that needed to be met. All sums were given in maravedíes, a small unit of account which made the totals seem large, but (with 400 maravedíes to the ducat) at the end of each week the king normally had only 20,000 ducats at his disposal (less than the cost of the Armada for one day). Small wonder that he struggled to find ways of delaying some payments (page 314).



42. The 'Journey to Tarazona', by Jehan Lhermite. In 1592 the king, his children, and his courtiers left the Escorial for Segovia, Medina del Campo and Tordesillas before passing through Simancas to Valladolid. The royal party then travelled through Navarre and Aragon (where Prince Philip was recognized as heir apparent) before returning to Madrid. Lhermite showed the exact route taken, 500 miles in all, and thus provided the first example of a Spanish 'tour guide' (page 339).

43. Philip II, by Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1588. Although formerly attributed to Pantoja de la Cruz, María Kusche has convincingly argued that Sánchez Coello painted this portrait, perhaps in 1588 when the king was 61. Compare his exhausted countenance with that of Charles V at age 55 (plate 8; page 342).



44. Philip's 'invalid chair', by Jehan Lhermite. Philip lived longer than any other member of his dynasty, but after 1595 arthritis forced him to wear loose-fitting garments to ease the pressure on his joints, and to spend his days in an ingenious chair with various settings that enabled him both to sit and doze without having to stand. From this contraption – in which he also travelled between his various palaces – Philip continued to govern his world-wide empire until his last illness in 1598 (page 342).

45. 'The Vision of Friar Julián de Alcalá', by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, c. 1645. The Franciscan friar and five witnesses from the village of Paracuellos de Járama observe the soul of Philip ascend from Purgatory to Paradise in September 1603. Murillo's painting (one of a series of done between 1645 and 1648 for the cloister of San Francisco of Seville) followed meticulously the description of the vision published by Fray Antonio Daza in 1611 (page 362).

Conventions

WHERE an established English version of a foreign place-name exists (Antwerp, Corunna, Geneva, The Hague, Vienna) I have used it, otherwise I have preferred the style used in the place itself today (Mechelen, not Malines; Aachen, not Aix-la-Chapelle). Likewise, where a standard English version of the style and title of an individual exists (William of Orange, Don John of Austria), I have used it, otherwise I have preferred the version used by the individual. One exception is Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (1517–86). Although he used the style 'bishop of Arras' between 1540 and 1562 and thereafter 'Cardinal Granvelle', he appears throughout this book as 'Granvelle'.

To avoid confusion and facilitate comparisons, all sums of money mentioned in this book have been given in Spanish ducats, each one roughly equivalent in the later sixteenth century to one escudo (or crown) and to two florins. About four ducats made up one pound sterling.

On 24 February 1582 Pope Gregory XIII ordered all Christians to advance their calendar by ten days, but different countries adopted the 'new style' at different times: in Spain 15 October 1582 immediately followed 4 October; in most of the provinces of the Netherlands in rebellion against Philip, 25 December immediately followed 14 December 1582; in the 'loyal' provinces 22 February 1583 immediately followed 11 February; and so on. All dates in this book after 4 October 1582 appear in New Style unless otherwise stated, even for states (like England) that rejected the Gregorian Calendar; and throughout I have assumed that each calendar year began on 1 January (and not on 25 March, as in the Old Style or Julian Calendar).

Preface

María José Rodríguez-Salgado, my friend and colleague for thirty-five years, once wrote, 'I have spent more time with Philip II than with any other man; indeed one could say that I have devoted the best years of my life to him.'[1] I could say the same. I began documentary research for a biography of the king in the 1960s, taking as my core source the holograph memoranda he exchanged with his leading advisers: documents once in the 'Altamira collection' but now divided between repositories in New York, Madrid, Geneva and London. In 1978 Little, Brown of Boston published *Philip II* in their series, 'The Library of World Biography', but since then thousands more holograph memoranda formerly in the archive of the counts of Altamira have entered the public domain. Those in the Biblioteca de Zabálburu, in Madrid, remained closed to researchers until 1987 because of a disputed inheritance, while no one saw those in the vaults of the Hispanic Society of America, in New York, between the time they were filed away by the king's secretaries and 2012, when they were identified and catalogued.

The Altamira documents are unique. The king transacted as much business as possible in writing, and his messages to senior ministers – often scribbled in the margins of their reports to him – addressed information, petitions and problems that came to his desk from all over the world. He resolved some matters in a single document, others in a series of exchanges spread over several days, and still others in several exchanges on the same day. In many cases Philip lapsed into a logorrhoea that not only revealed the thought processes that underlay his decisions but also shared details on his personal life – when and where he ate and slept; what he had just read; which trees and flowers he wanted to plant in his gardens (and where); how problems with his eyes, his legs or his wrist, or a cold or a headache, had made him fall behind with his paperwork. Many messages also dealt with what his ministers disparagingly called trivia (*menudencias*): decisions which they considered unnecessary. Should a Morisco

boy who claimed he could divine water go to the Pardo palace, where the gardens needed irrigation? (Yes: but he would get only one chance.) Where should his builders locate the toilets ('necesarias') at the Escorial? ('Let these toilets be situated in a place where the kitchen staff can't smell them', although 'to make the right decision, I would like to see the plans of the water conduits'.)[2]

The king's addiction to 'trivia' irritated and sometimes infuriated his ministers – in part because the same document that commented on water diviners or locating toilets might also convey a decision vital to the fate of the Monarchy: how to persuade Don John of Austria to go to the Netherlands and become governor-general; whether or not to sign a ceasefire with the Ottoman sultan; when and how to invade England (to take three examples from a single year: 1576). In most of his rescripts, the king shifted between public and private affairs without warning, as different ideas entered his mind. His overworked ministers therefore needed to read every word he wrote. So must historians.

Even with this wealth of personal material, writing the king's biography is not easy. Philip boasted that 'I began to rule in the year 1543', the year in which his father, Emperor Charles V, named him regent of Castile and Aragon; and between 1554 and 1556 he became in succession king of Naples and England, ruler of the Netherlands, and monarch of Spain, Sicily and Spanish America. In 1565 Philip's subjects began the conquest of the Philippines, which they named in his honour, and between 1580 and 1583 he acquired Portugal and all its overseas possessions. Thereafter, he ruled the first global empire in history until he died in 1598, aged 71.

The extent of his Monarchy, combined with the long duration of his reign, present Philip's biographers with the first of four major interpretive obstacles: an excess of data. As the distinguished Hispanist Pascual de Gayangos observed in the mid-nineteenth century, as he transcribed some of the hundreds of thousands of documents written and read by the king, 'The history of Philip II is in a way a history of the world'; and William Hickling Prescott, the historian for whom Gayangos prepared those transcripts, began his three-volume study of the king with a claim only slightly more modest: 'The history of Philip the Second is the history of Europe during the latter half of the sixteenth century.' Although Gayangos and others compiled over fifteen fat volumes of transcripts for Prescott, these constitute only a fragment of the surviving documentation: on one occasion, the king claimed he had signed 400 letters in a single morning, and a well-informed ambassador asserted that on some days 2,000 documents passed across the royal desk. 'Philippizing', as Prescott termed his work on the king, is a lifetime commitment.[3]

Paradoxically, the second major interpretive obstacle facing Philip's biographers seems to contradict the first. Even if a diligent historian managed to consult all the relevant papers that survive, many of the king's decisions would

remain impenetrable. Although Philip committed more of his thoughts and decisions to paper than almost any other ruler, he deliberately left others in obscurity, and at all times he urged his ministers to proceed 'with secrecy and dissimulation' ('con secreto y dissimulación': one of the commonest phrases in his vocabulary). Sometimes he deliberately laid down his quill, because 'this is a matter to talk about, not to write about', and at other times he tried to destroy all written evidence specifically to conceal what he had done and why. In addition, as Philip's father once warned him, some political decisions 'are so impenetrable and uncertain that I do not know how to describe them to you' because 'they are full of confusions and contradictions, either because of the state of affairs or because of conscience'.[4] Like his father, Philip took some decisions for reasons that neither he nor his closest advisers could fully explain. Thus in 1571, Philip's irrepressible enthusiasm for a totally unrealistic plan to 'kill or capture' Elizabeth Tudor left his councillors mystified. 'It is remarkable to see how committed His Majesty has become to this English business,' wrote Dr Martín de Velasco, a pragmatic legal expert who had served the king for over twenty years, and he marvelled 'how the news that the Queen [Elizabeth] knows all about his plan has scarcely cooled his ardour'. Therefore, Velasco concluded, 'His Majesty is so hot for this venture that it seems to be God's work', and so everyone else must also suspend their scepticism and instead 'assist and advance such a Holy resolve'.[5]

How can modern historians understand matters that seemed 'impenetrable and uncertain' even to the protagonists? One obvious resource is the testimony of contemporary observers of Philip and his court; but here we encounter a third interpretive obstacle, memorably described by the French intellectual Voltaire in the mid-eighteenth century: 'To understand Philip II, one cannot state too often that we must mistrust the descriptions of contemporaries, who were almost always motivated by either flattery or hatred.' And, indeed, as Robert Watson (Voltaire's contemporary and the king's first Scottish biographer) observed, 'No character was ever drawn by different historians in more opposite colours than that of Philip'.[6] But one important exception exists: the dispatches of the dozen foreign ambassadors who resided at the court of Spain. They dedicated their time, their money and their energy to removing the veil of 'secrecy and dissimulation' with which the king sought to conceal his decisions and his plans from others. The diplomats' sources ranged from Ruy Gómez de Silva (Philip's Portuguese Favourite who regularly shared state secrets with his uncle Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador) to Queen Isabel's French dwarf (who, as everyone except the French ambassador forgot, was in almost constant attendance on her and overheard absolutely everything). Diplomatic dispatches founded on such well-informed sources provide crucial insights into decision-making.

The final obstacle to understanding Philip II is the hardest to overcome: his exalted status. A daring friar once teased the king: ' "Oh, Sire, very few kings go to heaven": a statement that startled those who heard it. Then the king asked: "And why is that, Father?" He replied: "Because there are very few kings!" ' There are even fewer kings in the twenty-first century, which makes it more difficult for us to empathize with a monarch – especially one like Philip who spent all but six months of his reign at war, often fighting on several fronts at once. In his brilliant study, *Supreme Command*, Eliot Cohen emphasized 'the difficulties writers have in putting themselves in the place of a wartime political leader' (whether king or commoner), because those leaders bear 'manifold responsibilities and carry stresses' that very few historians have experienced. Cohen deemed this 'the greatest obstacle to sound historical judgment on wartime statesmanship'.[7]

In his celebrated biography *Philip of Spain*, published in 1997, Henry Kamen circumvented this obstacle by arguing that the king somehow managed to escape these 'manifold responsibilities'. 'Philip was never at any time in adequate control of events, or of his kingdoms, or even of his own destiny,' Kamen wrote. 'It follows that he cannot be held responsible for more than a small part of what eventually transpired during his reign . . . He was "imprisoned within a destiny in which he himself had little hand". He could do little more than play the dice available to him.'[8] I reject such extreme determinism. Certainly some 'events', and even some 'kingdoms', occasionally escaped from Philip's control, just as they occasionally escape from the control of every wartime leader; but Philip spent almost every day of his long life taking decisions intended either to retain or to regain the initiative. One night in 1557 we find him writing out orders in his own hand 'at one o'clock in the morning'; in 1565, he toiled at his desk although 'I am so preoccupied and starved of sleep because I need to spend most nights reading the papers which other business prevents me from seeing during the day – and so I am just beginning to look at what you have sent me now, which is after midnight'; in 1575, 'it's 10 o'clock, I feel shattered and I'm dying of hunger'; and, in 1583, 'I have spent the whole day reading and writing, and on many other things that I needed to do today, but all of it paperwork; and so I am writing this after 10 o'clock, very tired and very hungry.'[9]

Many of the decisions taken by Philip during the long, lonely days and nights at his desk had momentous consequences. In 1566 his refusal to renew the concessions (*Mandatos*) granted by his father to the Moriscos (Christians of Moorish descent) of Granada forty years before, and instead to enforce religious conformity on them, produced a civil war that led to the death of some 90,000 Spaniards, both Christians and Muslims, and the forced resettlement of some 80,000 Moriscos. The king's determination in 1571 to 'kill or capture'

Elizabeth Tudor turned her into an implacable enemy who inflicted enormous damage on Philip's subjects and on his prestige for the rest of her reign. More costly still, the king's decision to renew the war in the Netherlands in 1577 initiated hostilities that would last for thirty years, causing the death of tens of thousands of men, women and children, and costing over a hundred million ducats. In these and countless other cases, Philip was certainly in 'control of events', as well as 'of his own destiny': he could have chosen differently – to renew the *Mandatos*; to leave Elizabeth Tudor alone; to preserve the peace just concluded in the Netherlands – but he did not.

In 1599, Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas completed the draft of a history of recent times commissioned by Phillip II. He noted that 'all the kings of the world, and especially those of Castile and Aragon', had used an epithet (such as 'the Catholic' or 'the Wise'), and he thoughtfully supplied to the royal council a list of titles he considered appropriate for the late king: 'the good, the prudent, the honest, the just, the pious, the modest, the constant.' He also supplied a heroic image that featured one of these epithets (see plate 1).[10] The council approved, and Herrera entitled his book *General History of the World in the age of Philip II*, *the Prudent*, giving the king the title that has since become universal.

Although *Imprudent King* argues that Herrera erred in his choice of epithet, I agree with St Augustine that *Nemo nisi per amicitiam cognoscitur* – 'You cannot know someone except through friendship'. This does not mean that biographers should implicitly trust their subjects: on the contrary, we must be ready for them (whether living or dead) to mislead us, both deliberately (through the falsification or destruction of compromising documents) and inadvertently (through our own limited ability to comprehend their world, or by considering future developments that the protagonists could not have known). But St Augustine's precept does require biographers to extend to their subjects the same openness of mind, the same readiness to listen, that one would extend to a friend. It is in that spirit, gentle reader, that I will use Philip's own words as much as possible to portray his long life, from his conception in the Alhambra at Granada in August 1526 until September 1603, five years after his death, when a group of amazed witnesses near the village of Paracuellos de Járama watched the king's soul ascend from Purgatory to Paradise.

PART I

THE THRESHOLD OF POWER

CHAPTER ONE

Apprenticeship, 1527–1543

On 10 March 1526 Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and ruler of Spain, Mexico, the Netherlands and much of Italy, rode into the bustling city of Seville for the first time. Still in his travelling clothes and covered in dust, he dismounted in the courtyard of the royal palace and strode into the room where Princess Isabella of Portugal, his cousin, was waiting. The pope had already sent a dispensation to permit the two cousins to marry in Lent, and their representatives had already signed the marriage contract; so, after 15 minutes of polite conversation with the fiancée he had never seen, Charles changed into his finest clothes, attended a nuptial mass and danced. Then at 2 a.m. the couple went to bed and consummated their union.

The first weeks of married life for the imperial couple proved idyllic. They stayed 'in bed until 11 or 12' each morning and gave 'every sign of contentment' after they emerged.[1] They and their retinue then travelled slowly to Granada to pay their respects to their common ancestors buried in the cathedral, planning to continue their stately progress to Barcelona whence Charles would depart to lead a crusade against the Ottoman Turks, leaving his wife to govern Spain; but then news arrived that King Francis I of France had declared war on him. This precluded the emperor's departure from Spain. He and his wife therefore spent the next six months in Granada, hoping that the international situation would improve, and in the Alhambra high above the city the future Philip II was conceived. The English ambassador was the first to find out. 'The empress is with child, at which all the people are delighted,' he wrote on 30 September 1526 – the first known mention of the future king. The empress remained in Granada, resting, until early the following year when she travelled slowly to join her husband in Valladolid, then the administrative capital of Castile.[2]

As is often the case with a first child, the empress was in labour for many hours. She asked for a veil to be placed over her face, so that no one would see her agony; and when a midwife urged her to give full vent to her feelings the

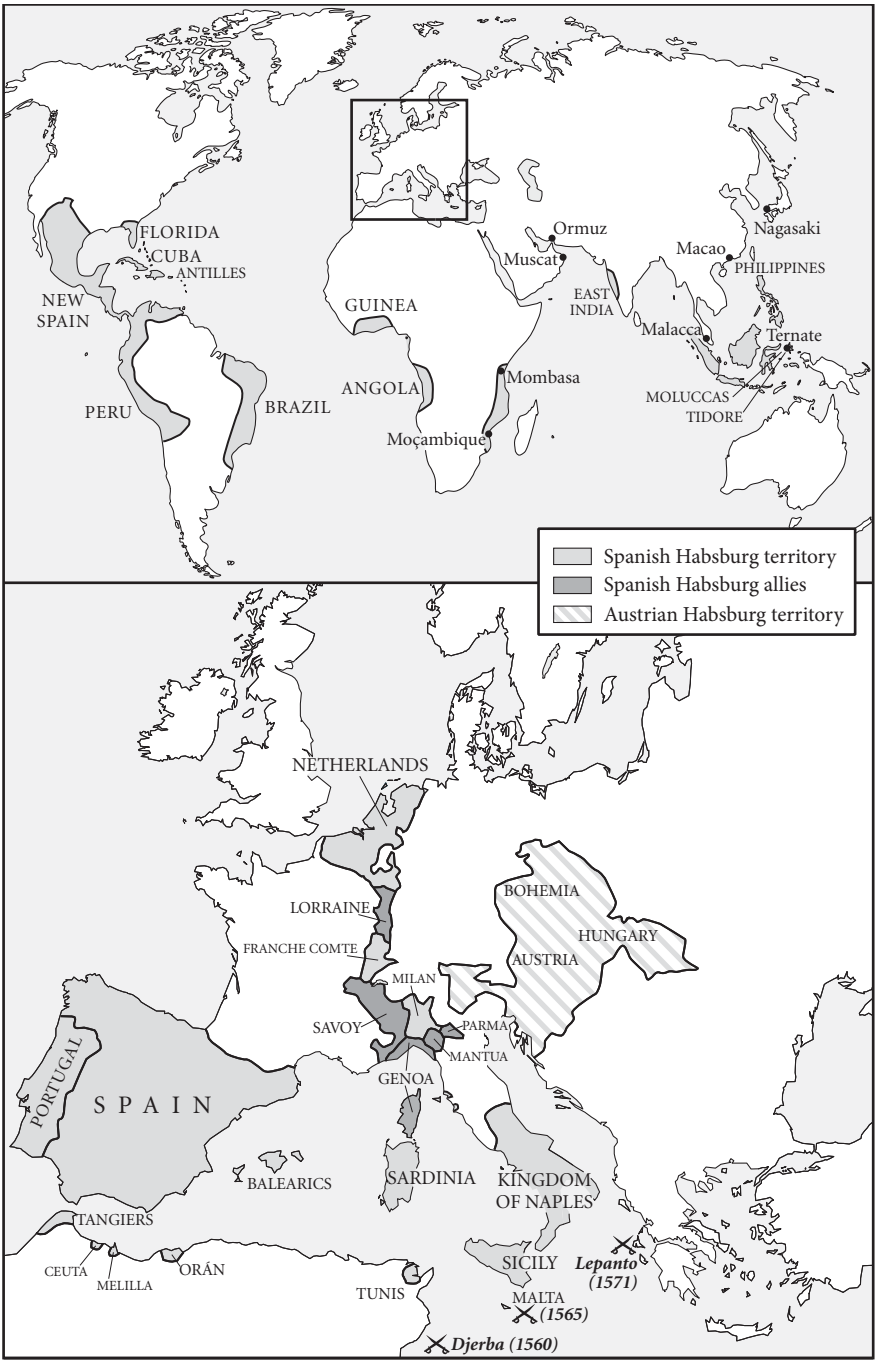
empress replied sternly: 'I would rather die. Don't talk to me like that: I may die, but I will not cry out'. Philip entered the world around 4 p.m. on 21 May 1527. Many Spaniards had expected the prince to receive one of the traditional names of the peninsular dynasties, such as Fernando or Juan, but Charles insisted on calling his firstborn after his own father, and so at the baptism ceremony two weeks later the royal heralds shouted three times: 'Philip, by the grace of God prince of Spain!' But Philip was heir to far more than Spain.[3]

The inheritance

Dynastic accident had brought together in the person of Charles V four separate inheritances. From his father's father, Emperor Maximilian of Austria, Charles received the ancestral Habsburg lands in central Europe; from his father's mother, Mary of Burgundy, he inherited numerous duchies, counties and lordships in the Netherlands and the Franche-Comté of Burgundy. From his mother's mother, Queen Isabella the Catholic, Charles received Castile and its outposts in North Africa, the Caribbean and Central America; from his mother's father, Ferdinand the Catholic, he inherited Aragon and the Aragonese dominions of Naples, Sicily and Sardinia. Charles soon added more territories to this impressive core of patrimonial states: several provinces in the Netherlands by treaty; the duchy of Lombardy in Italy when its native dynasty died out; and Tunis in North Africa by conquest. Most spectacular of all, in the Americas, about 2,000 of his Spanish subjects destroyed the Aztec empire and occupied an area eight times the size of Castile, whence fewer than 200 of them began the conquest of the Inca empire in Peru. In 1535, as he entered the city of Messina in Sicily, Charles V saw for the first time the felicitous phrase coined by the Roman poet Virgil for the possessions of the Emperor Augustus, fifteen centuries before: A SOLIS ORTU AD OCCASUM, 'from the rising to the setting of the sun' – or, as his 'spin doctors' would put it, 'an empire on which the sun never set'.

No European ruler had ever controlled such extensive territories, and the absence of precedents helps to explain the apparently haphazard nature of decision-making by the Spanish Habsburgs: they had no choice but to improvise and experiment, to test different techniques of government as they went along, to learn by trial and (sometimes) error. In any case, prior experience might not have helped, because for most of his reign Charles faced an unprecedented combination of enemies: two religious, the Protestants and the Papacy, and two political, France and the Ottoman empire.

A dangerous synergy between these enemies occurred after Maximilian died in January 1519, leaving two important items of unfinished business. The late emperor had failed to silence Dr Martin Luther, a professor at the University of Wittenberg in Saxony who wrote pamphlets and speeches to



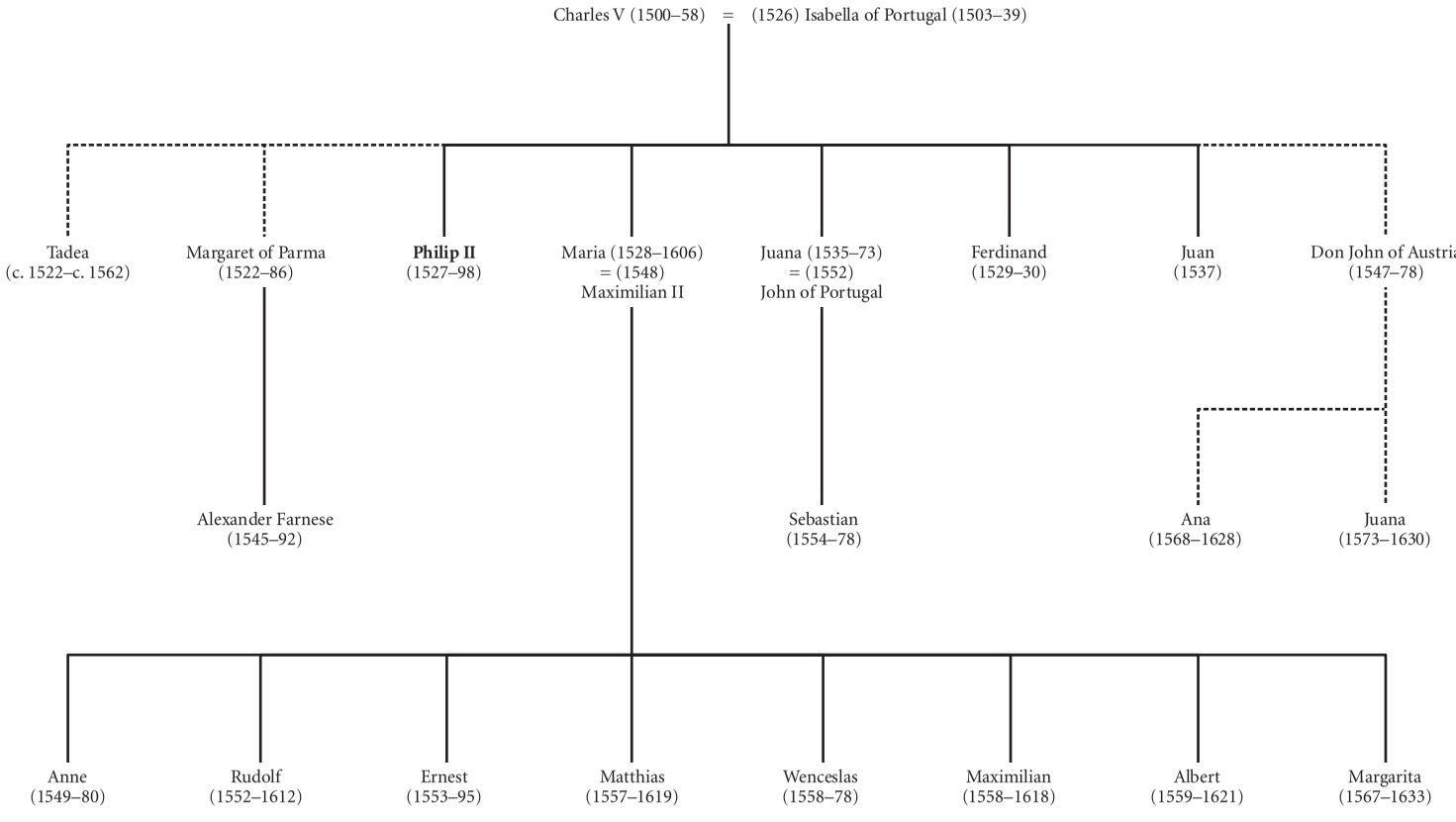
1. The Spanish Monarchy at its apogee, 1585. The annexation of Portugal and its overseas possessions made Philip the ruler of the first global empire in history. Although its core remained the Iberian peninsula, issues concerning Africa, Asia and America regularly flowed across Philip's desk and required him to make countless decisions.

mobilize public support for his claims that the Papacy was corrupt and required urgent reform. Maximilian had also failed to arrange for Charles to succeed him as Holy Roman Emperor, paramount ruler of Germany, and throughout the spring and summer of 1519, Charles and Francis I paid huge sums of money to the seven Electors (*Kurfürsten*) who would choose the 'king of the Romans' (emperor-elect, pending papal coronation). Eventually, Charles won the contest, so that his territories now surrounded France to the north, east and south. In 1521 Francis declared war, and for over a century the kings of France would strive to end what they saw as Habsburg encirclement by the various territories inherited or acquired by Charles.

The popes, too, felt threatened by the Imperial election because Charles now ruled not only Sardinia and Spain to the west, and Naples and Sicily to the south, but also the Empire (and, after 1535, Milan) in the north. Moreover, Rome depended on grain exports from Sicily, while its entire commerce by sea and land lay at the mercy of the surrounding Habsburg bases. Papal support for the 'crusades' by Charles (and later by his son) against both Muslims and Protestants therefore tended to remain muted for fear that any further success would tighten their grip on Rome. The Ottoman sultans also saw Charles as their natural enemy. In the course of his long reign (1520–66), Suleiman the Magnificent led his troops up the Danube five times, on each occasion gaining lands either from the Habsburgs or from their allies. Only his need to deal with other foreign and domestic enemies prevented further advances.

Domestic enemies periodically distracted Charles, too. To begin with, the death of his grandfather Ferdinand of Aragon in 1516 left a contested inheritance. Although Ferdinand's marriage to Isabella of Castile had created a dynastic union, it left intact the institutions, laws, currency and judicial structure of each of their possessions – Castile, Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and Navarre (annexed by Ferdinand in 1512) – and the powers and policies of the crown differed in each area. Above all, although Ferdinand had been king consort of Castile during Isabella's lifetime, when she died in 1504 his title lapsed and the crown passed to the couple's oldest child, Juana, and her husband Philip of Habsburg, ruler of the Netherlands, Charles's parents.

Juana, unlike her mother, showed neither desire nor aptitude for government and so Ferdinand and Philip vied for control of Castile. Philip won – but almost immediately died, whereupon Ferdinand dismissed the officials appointed by his son-in-law, most of whom (later known as 'Philippists') fled to the court of the young Charles in the Netherlands, where they spent the next decade plotting revenge. Ferdinand also placed Juana, although 'queen proprietress' of Castile, in preventive custody and acted as 'governor' of the kingdom. In his last testament he named Charles his sole heir and in 1517 the prince and the 'Philippists' arrived from the Netherlands to take charge. Two years later



2. The Family of Charles V. The House of Habsburg tended to produce either huge families or none at all. Thus of the fifteen children of Charles V's daughter Maria (only eight of whom appear in the figure, for reasons of space) only Anne had offspring, of whom only one, the future Philip III, produced heirs. The rest apparently married too late to reproduce or did not marry at all. (Dashed lines in the chart indicate illegitmacy.)

Charles's election as Holy Roman Emperor obliged him to return to northern Europe to restore order in Germany, and in his absence major anti-Habsburg uprisings broke out in Mallorca, Sicily, Valencia and, above all, Castile, where rebels known as the *Comuneros* sought to make Juana queen in fact as well as name. The emperor's return to Spain in 1522 restored order there, but four years later Habsburg military and financial support failed to prevent Suleiman from advancing into Hungary. In desperation, Charles offered the Lutherans of Germany toleration in return for military assistance against the Turks. The spread of Protestant ideas now accelerated both within and beyond Germany.

'Little Phil'

Charles was powerless to halt these developments because his war with France and several Italian states kept him confined to Spain, so instead he orchestrated displays of rejoicing for the birth of *Felipito* ('Little Phil') as the emperor's jester called him. According to an ambassador, 'the Emperor is so happy, delighted and proud of his new son that he does nothing but order celebrations'. 'Felipito', of course, remained oblivious to this, and also to the ceremony in Madrid in 1528 at which his future subjects swore allegiance to him as prince of Castile. Instead, his attention focused on those who looked after him.[4]

Charles and Isabella continued to appear in public as 'the happiest spouses in the world', but although the empress doted on her husband, he saw his wife primarily in terms of administration and procreation.[5] Thanks to the wet-nurses, the empress swiftly recovered her fertility and, three months after the prince's birth, Charles left his newly pregnant wife as regent of Castile while he went to Aragon to meet its Cortes (the representative assembly), intending to travel on to Barcelona and thence to Italy; and when hostilities with France once again prevented his departure, he went to Valencia instead of returning to his wife's side. Charles was therefore not present when Isabella gave birth to their second child, María, in June 1528. He returned a few weeks afterwards, but departed nine months later – once again leaving his pregnant wife to serve as regent. This time an advantageous peace with his enemies enabled Charles to sail across the Mediterranean to Italy. Although his new son, Ferdinand, died in infancy, the emperor did not return to see his wife and his surviving children again for four years.

'Felipito' therefore passed most of his infancy without a father. At age two he was weaned, and the following year he and his sister 'spend their time competing to see who has more clothes'. An obsequious courtier informed Charles that his son 'and his crossbow are such a threat to the deer that I fear that when Your Majesty returns [to Spain] you will have nothing left to kill'. Like all small children, the prince had his ups and downs. In 1531, when he

'organized the children' at court for a mock joust 'using lighted candles as lances', everyone laughed. They laughed again when Philip tried to persuade a courtier to accept one of his page boys 'because he had lots of them', and when the courtier refused he offered 'the page to his sister, who had none; and they replied that it was not so easy to find pages. To this he replied angrily "Then find another prince: you will find lots of them in the streets" ' (Philip's first recorded dialogue). At other times, however, 'His Highness becomes angry when he does not get to eat what he wants. He can be so tiresome' that his mother 'becomes really annoyed and sometimes smacks him'.[6]

At age four, Philip refused to travel with his mother in her carriage; instead 'he wanted the Infanta [María] to travel in it with him, because he enjoys her company so much – which suggests that he will be quite a lady's man'. The prince also refused to ride his mule side-saddle: 'He would only ride if he had his feet in the stirrups'.[7] On the feast of St James, 1531, for attending a ceremony in a convent at which three young women became nuns, the prince discarded the long robes then worn by infants of both sexes and appeared for the first time in the doublet and hose worn only by boys. Henceforth, although still accompanied everywhere by his mother, her ladies and his sister, the prince began to attend tournaments, festivals and other public activities. He had begun to move from the private to the public stage.

The empress's decision to hold this rite of passage in a convent reflects not only her own devotion but also the pious zeal of the two other women who oversaw the young prince's welfare: Doña Inés Manrique de Lara and Doña Leonor de Mascarenhas. The former, from an eminent Castilian family, had served Isabella the Catholic and then retired to a nunnery, where her exemplary piety earned her the reputation of a holy woman (*beata*). No doubt it was this that led the empress to summon Doña Inés to court to serve as her son's governess (*aya*), responsible for his physical and moral welfare. Doña Leonor, who was much younger and had migrated from Portugal to Castile in the empress's entourage, also lived as a *beata*. Although lacking the official title, she acted as informal governess to the prince. The religious zeal of these two women mirrored that of the empress: practical, ascetic and intense. Before Philip's conception, Isabella ordered special masses to be said to ensure her fertility and made a vow to the church of Santa María la Antigua in Seville that she would give a silver statue of a child as an ex-voto for every child that she conceived (her testament stipulated that five silver statues should be made and delivered to the church). She gave birth surrounded by the collection of relics she had brought with her from Portugal and clutching 'St Elizabeth's girdle', which the mother of John the Baptist had reputedly held during her labour; afterwards she sent the garments that her son had worn before and after his baptism to be blessed by another *beata*, who sent back some of her own

garments so that, according to a chronicler, 'the prince should be swaddled in them and thus protected from attacks by the Devil'.[8]

Philip survived not only 'attacks by the Devil' but also the normal hazards of childhood. One day he strayed outside the railings on the edge of an upper floor of the palace, and such traumatic events, coupled with the death of the empress's second son Fernando, profoundly affected Isabella. Henceforth, she panicked at the slightest illness in her surviving children, especially Philip, and her spirits sagged whenever Charles was away. According to a foreign ambassador, 'her depression stems from the loss of the Infante, who enjoys God's glory, and from the ailments of the prince, but above all from the absence of her husband'.[9] Then, in spring 1533, news arrived that Charles would come to Barcelona, and Isabella set off with her two surviving children to meet him. Philip was by now tall enough and strong enough to ride a horse, but his intellectual development lagged: he still had not learned to read, and his principal exposure to written culture remained oral. He listened to *The song of El Cid* so often that he knew parts of it by heart: when one of his companions importuned him one day, Philip replied 'You really annoy me, so-and-so; but tomorrow you will kiss my hand', a rebuke clearly based on a passage from the medieval epic, in which King Alfonso tells El Cid

> You really annoy me, Rodrigo; Rodrigo, you treat me badly,
> But tomorrow you will swear allegiance, and then you will kiss my hand.[10]

Back in Spain, the emperor decided that his son – now aged seven – needed a tutor, and in 1534 he appointed Juan Martínez del Guijo, normally known by the Latinized version of his surname, *Silíceo*, a 48-year-old priest of humble origins who had studied at Paris and published books on philosophy and mathematics before becoming a professor of philosophy at the university of Salamanca. For the next five years, under Silíceo's direction, the prince struggled to learn from the *Short Grammar* by Marineo Sículo (apparently the first book that he owned) and the devotional works of Ludolf of Saxony, known as 'The Carthusian'.

In March 1535 Charles once more abandoned his son and left his wife pregnant: three months later, she gave birth to another daughter, Juana. Shortly afterwards Charles decided to remove the prince from 'the control of women' and created a separate household for him, headed by Don Juan de Zúñiga y Avellaneda, a 'Philippist' who had served him for almost thirty years. Significantly, Charles declared that he wanted his son to be raised in the same way as his uncle, Prince Juan of Trastámara, son and heir of Ferdinand and Isabella. The creation of a separate household in 1535 meant that henceforth Philip's entourage would include only male servants (the emperor appointed about forty of them) and that Zúñiga (or his deputy) would sleep in his chamber

at night and keep him under constant surveillance by day. 'I am only absent', Zúñiga assured Charles, 'when I write to Your Majesty' or when his charge was 'at school, or somewhere with his mother that I am not allowed to enter'.[11] Philip's world would never be the same.

Prince of Spain

Don Juan's absence when the prince was 'at school' reflected the Castilian tradition that 'a prince should have two people to instruct him in different matters: a tutor [*maestro*] to teach him letters and good manners, and a governor [*ayo*] to impart military and courtly exercises'.[12] Silíceo therefore had sole charge of teaching the prince and his principal pages how to read, write and pray; but progress was slow. By November 1535, Charles learned that 'two months have passed without any reading or writing' because the prince had been ill; while three months later Silíceo announced that he had again suspended the prince's study of Latin for some days 'because starting is so difficult': small wonder that at age thirteen the prince 'has only just started to write Latin'.[13]

By contrast, Philip showed precocious religious devotion. The stern and godly Zúñiga noted that 'the fear of God comes so naturally to the prince that I have seen nothing like it in someone of his age'; but, he continued, the prince 'learns much better after he leaves school' – adding mischievously 'and in this he somewhat resembles his father at the same age'. The frequent purchases of crossbows, arrows and javelins by his household treasurer testify to Philip's growing ability to slaughter animals in the royal parks, and eventually Charles had to establish a weekly quota of each species that Philip was allowed to kill.[14] To make up for this disappointment, the prince's valet received 'thirty ducats every month with which to buy things that please His Highness'. These included 'a silver knight with full armour, and a silver horse for the said knight'; 'a small bronze artillery piece, mounted on a carriage'; and 'six very small gilded artillery pieces'. These items were all supposed to develop the young prince's martial spirit. Other items were simply 'for His Highness to enjoy', such as 'a bell from America with a sweet sound'. Philip also owned a deck of cards with which he and Zúñiga's oldest son, Don Luis de Requesens, 'spent a whole day building a church made of cards'. He also liked caged birds, some of them deliberately blinded because sightless birds were thought to sing better, and one of the earliest surviving images of the young prince shows him playing with a bird controlled by a cord (see plate 2). He later acquired other pets, including a dog that slept in his bedroom, a monkey, six guinea pigs and a parakeet.[15]

Philip also learned how to behave appropriately in public. He danced with his sister and he marched in the processions that preceded bullfights and tournaments, and in 1535, for the first time, he appeared in public in armour at the

opening ceremony for a joust. The emperor was seldom present at these events. He left Spain in March 1535 and only returned in January 1537; afterwards, as soon as the empress had conceived again, Charles left for Aragon and the empress gave birth alone to another boy, named Juan (after Charles's Trastámara uncle). He, too, died soon afterwards. This brought the emperor hurrying back to Spain – perhaps concerned that his wife was approaching the end of her fertility when he still only had one heir – and soon Isabella became pregnant for the fifth time. Once again, she miscarried. A painting in March 1539 shows the royal family, intently watching a tournament together, but their happiness would not last: the empress gave birth to another stillborn infant, fell ill and died on 1 May 1539, three weeks before Prince Philip's twelfth birthday (see plate 3).

Philip never forgot the years spent with his mother. When in 1570 the majordomo of his new wife, Anne of Austria, asked what protocol her household should follow, the king answered curtly 'let everything be the same as in the time of my mother'; and when specific questions arose, he again referred to 'what I remember happened in the time of my mother'. Philip also remembered events and people from his early years. One day in 1594, at the age of 67, memories from those years overwhelmed him as he read a letter proposing candidates for the post of Inquisitor-General. When Cardinal Juan de Tavera got the post, Philip mused, 'he had been archbishop of Toledo since the year 1534, when don Alonso de Fonseca died. I also knew him, and saw him the night before he died: we had just arrived at Alcalá de Henares, and he died that night'. The king went on to recall his first meeting with the father of one of the candidates, 'which was early in the year 1533, with my lady the empress, who is in glory, when we went to Barcelona to await the arrival of the emperor'. He added: 'I turned six in Barcelona that year.'[16]

Father and son, 1539–43

Upon the death of his wife, the emperor retired to a monastery for seven weeks to grieve, and he ordered both his daughters to move to the town of Arévalo, where they could grow up away from the bustle of the court – and away from their brother. Philip therefore presided alone at the funeral obsequies for his mother, held in the church of San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo. It was his first appearance on the public stage as a solo actor.

When he emerged from his monastic retreat, Charles resolved to take personal charge of grooming his heir and to this end he significantly increased the size of Philip's household, appointing Zúñiga as its majordomo (while remaining the prince's governor); but almost at once, news arrived of a tax revolt in the Netherlands. This presented Charles and his advisers with an agonizing dilemma, because the taxpayers of Castile also seemed restless. In

1538 the nobles assembled in the Cortes of Castile refused to vote any more funds for the emperor's wars, and he dismissed them with angry reproaches. Leaving Spain therefore represented a major risk: everyone remembered that the last time Charles left without naming a regent of the blood royal, the Comuneros revolt almost cost him his throne. Now, without the empress, he lacked any adult relative who could govern Spain; but he dared not stay because, according to his regent in the Netherlands, 'what is at stake here is whether Your Majesty will be master or servant'.[17]

In November 1539 Charles departed for the Netherlands, leaving Philip as his nominal regent but with executive power invested in Cardinal Tavera, primate of Spain and Inquisitor-General, assisted by Francisco de Los Cobos, the de facto head of Castile's administrative and financial bureaucracy, whom Charles appointed as Philip's secretary. Just before he left Spain, Charles prepared two sets of Instructions. Those addressed to his ministers concentrated on their administrative duties and responsibilities (both towards the emperor and towards each other), while the document for Philip dealt with policy. The emperor composed it so that, in case 'God may choose to call me' before he had achieved his policy goals, 'the said prince will know our intentions' and follow the correct religious, dynastic and political strategies 'so he can live and reign in peace and prosperity'. It was the first of many detailed papers of advice that would decisively shape the prince's political outlook. Philip would follow the goals set out by his father for the rest of his life.[18]

After enjoining the prince to love God and defend His Church, the emperor urged him to place his trust above all in his relatives.

> Create and continue a true, sincere and perfect friendship and understanding with the king of the Romans, our brother [Ferdinand], and with his children, our nieces and nephews; with the Queens of France [his sister Eleanor] and Hungary [his sister Mary]; with the king and queen of Portugal [his sister Catherine], and their children, and with the said king's brother, as you are obliged to do through your family ties, and continue the friendship and understanding that exist between them and me.

Charles next considered how best to deal with three contentious issues: France, the Netherlands and Milan. He saw them as linked, because although he was currently at peace with the king of France, this would continue only if the parties agreed 'to end and extinguish all quarrels and conflicts of interest' concerning the Netherlands and Milan and sealed the deal with 'marriage alliances'. The emperor revealed that he had promised King Francis that his second son would marry the Infanta María, with Milan as the dowry. In spite of this promise, however, both Charles and the empress had stipulated in their

testaments that 'if we should have no other son than the prince, as has occurred', then María would marry a son of Charles's brother Ferdinand, and that together they would rule the Netherlands. This issue had become critically important with the 'unrest and rebellion' in the Low Countries. The emperor feared that 'the diversity of its inhabitants and the multitude of sects opposed to our holy faith and Church, established under the pretence of liberty and self-government, may cause not only their total loss and separation from our House, but also their alienation from our holy faith and Church'. He therefore proposed to renege on his previous undertakings to both Francis and Ferdinand, so that 'the prince our son shall inherit the Netherlands' – but, he warned Philip, since this outcome involved serious risks, he might after all decide to 'bequeath the said Netherlands to our daughter [María] and her future spouse, in order to avoid the said risks, to benefit Christendom and our son, and to assure the well-being, security and tranquillity of the kingdoms and other territories that he will inherit'.

The emperor's Instructions also laid out the policy Philip must follow towards three other states: Portugal, Savoy and England. The Infanta Juana must marry the heir to the Portuguese throne, Prince John; the French must evacuate Savoy, seized from Charles's brother-in-law the duke; and Philip must 'take great care not to agree carelessly to anything that might adversely affect our faith and Church' in England by allowing the Protestants to make gains. Moreover, family ties also obliged the prince 'to watch over' his cousin Mary Tudor 'and to assist and advance her cause as much as may conveniently be done'.

This remarkable document, laying bare secrets that Charles had revealed to no one else, testifies to great confidence in his heir; but since Philip was too young to implement any of its policies, we must wonder about the intended audience. Since the surviving Instructions to Tavera contain nothing about foreign policy, and since the document addressed to Philip contains nothing about keeping it secret (as the emperor's later Instructions would do), no doubt Charles intended his son to share it with Tavera, Cobos and Zúñiga. If Charles should die abroad, this triumvirate would guide all the prince's dealings.

Although these Instructions never took effect (because Charles survived), they identified several issues that would dominate Spanish foreign policy for the rest of the century: the paramount need to maintain good relations with the Austrian branch of the family, and to intermarry with the Portuguese royal family; the possibility that either Milan or the Netherlands might need to be abandoned; the responsibility to restore Savoy to its duke; and the obligation to protect the Catholic faith, and the Catholic claimant to the throne, in England. In addition, the document exhibited three defects that would undermine Spanish foreign policy for a century: excessive secrecy, contempt for solemn promises and reluctance to surrender any territory. Charles's Instructions of

1539 thus highlighted in striking fashion both the strengths and the weaknesses of the possessions that his only son would inherit.

For the next two years, Zúñiga had sole control of Philip's upbringing, and his detailed reports to the emperor enable us to follow the prince's progress. To begin with, his religious life changed radically. After his mother's death, the prince turned his devotional attention increasingly to his namesake, St Philip, on whose feast day he became a knight of the Golden Fleece (1533) and recovered from smallpox (1536) – events which showed that the saint was 'looking out' for him. On that same day in 1539 his mother died, a coincidence that further reinforced Philip's devotion to his patron, because it suggested that the saint had intervened to escort his mother to heaven. Henceforth he would combine celebration of his saint's day with commemoration of his mother's death. In 1541, Philip took his first communion, and Zúñiga proudly assured the emperor that 'Your Majesty should thank Our Lord that he has a Christian son, who is also virtuous and intelligent.' As an example of the former, Zúñiga noted that of the thirty ducats that Philip received each month 'to buy things that please him' he gave 'fifteen to God'.[19]

The prince also excelled at outdoor exercises. In 1541 he began to go hawking, and Zúñiga reported that 'although he greatly enjoys shooting his crossbow, when he cannot do that he enjoys hawking – and indeed any outdoors activity'. Philip also learned how to fight. His household treasurer bought 'two fencing swords' and 'four lances so that His Highness could run at the ring', and by 1543 Zúñiga declared that 'His Highness is the best swordsman in this court', adding a little later 'he fights very well on foot and on horseback'.[20]

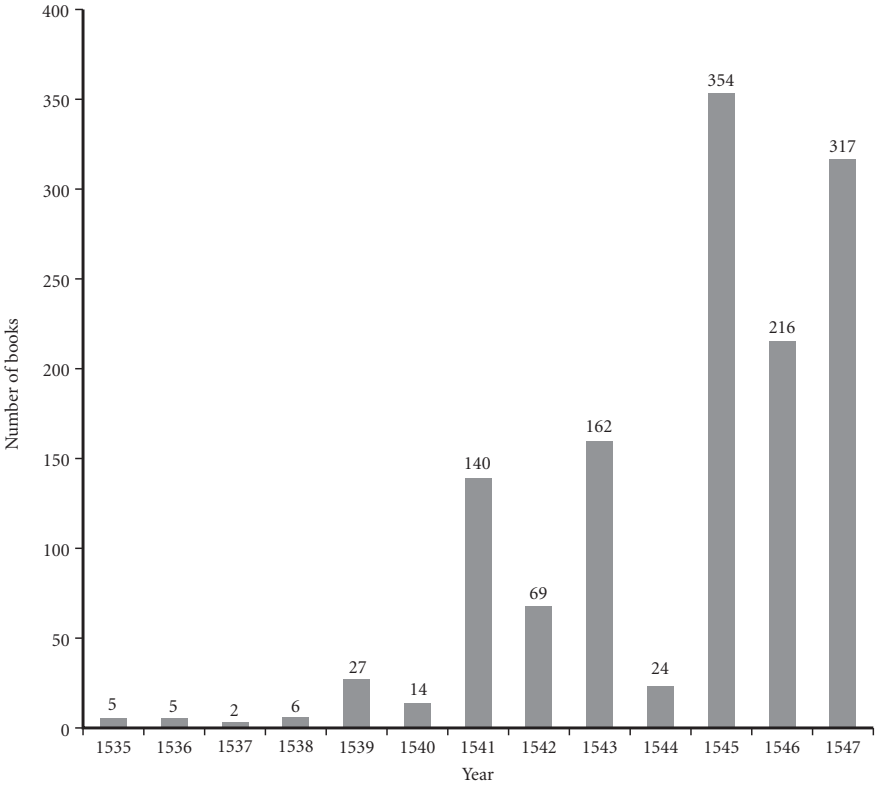
Zúñiga remained less enthusiastic about the prince's studies. In June 1541 he noted that 'for the past two months, I have been more optimistic than I used to be that he will like Latin, which pleases me very much because I believe being a good Latinist is an important part of being a good ruler, for knowing how to govern oneself and others', – but that precise modifier 'two months' was not accidental.[21] At Zúñiga's suggestion, earlier that year Charles removed Silíceo as his son's tutor and appointed the Aragonese humanist Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, 'a very learned man' who was 'of pure blood' (that is, without any Jewish or Moorish ancestors), 'as master of grammar to teach all the present and future pages of the prince'. The new instructor immediately exposed his young charges to the best scholarship available.[22]

Although Silíceo despised humanism, he had not entirely shielded Philip from its influence. For example in January 1540, during a visit to Alcalá de Henares to hunt, Cardinal Tavera decreed that the prince should visit the Complutense University and for three hours Philip toured the classrooms, listening to lecturers in Latin, and sitting in the audience while a bachelor of theology graduated. But full exposure to the new learning began only when

Calvete took over, soon assisted by three other instructors: Honorato Juan to teach him mathematics and architecture; Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda to teach him history and geography; and Francisco de Vargas Mexía to teach him theology. All four preceptors had travelled extensively outside Spain and boasted a cosmopolitan outlook that would broaden the prince's horizons.

From the first, Calvete implemented a clear pedagogical vision. In 1541, he purchased 140 books, and had them specially bound for the prince, more than doubling the size of his library. Almost all these works were written in Latin, either by classical authors (such as Caesar, Cicero, Plautus, Seneca, Terence, Vergil) or by modern humanists including Erasmus (*Adages* and *Enchiridion*), Juan Luis Vives (*Of the soul and life*) and – surprisingly – Philip Melanchthon, Luther's principal lieutenant (*On the art of speaking*). Moreover, although works in Latin predominated, Philip became the first Spanish monarch to read Greek (he could eventually manage works by Homer in the original) and he also learned some Hebrew and Aramaic so that he could study the Bible in its original languages. He acquired an Arabic grammar and 'a book about the Qu'ran that His Highness ordered to be bought'.[23] Philip acquired the last item during a visit to Valencia in 1542, perhaps because Honorato Juan (a Valencian) thought it might help his pupil to understand his future Morisco subjects. The visit formed part of a Grand Tour during which the emperor took his heir to Navarre, Aragon and Catalonia as well as Valencia, to be recognized as 'heir apparent', and en route Calvete, Juan and Sepúlveda – all of whom accompanied Philip – seized every opportunity to provide instruction about the different languages, cultures and histories of his new vassals. Finally, when news arrived that the French had laid siege to Perpignan, the second city of Catalonia, Sepúlveda led a debate among courtiers on the best way to save it – Philip's first exposure to military strategy.

When the court returned to Castile, Calvete purchased more books in Latin to support his ambitious pedagogic strategy. Works of history – written by classical and medieval authors as well as modern humanists – constituted the largest single category (25 per cent of all books purchased between 1535 and 1545), closely followed by theology (15 per cent of the total), but most disciplines were represented. As he and his pupil finished each volume, Calvete seems to have added a 'hashtag' (#) before moving on, and by the time his formal education ceased in 1545, Philip had studied several hundred books on a wide variety of topics. Calvete also exposed the prince to learning in other ways. Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, who had lived in America for decades, presented him with a dedicated manuscript copy of his *Very brief account of the destruction of America*; and during a visit to Salamanca in 1543, aged sixteen, he spent his first afternoon 'inspecting the classrooms and hearing some lectures' by a university professor. The following day 'His Highness listened to all the other professors and attended an oral examination in Law . . . He left very late.'[24]



3. Books acquired by Philip, 1535–47. Prince Philip's household treasurer recorded the title and date of purchase of every book acquired by or for his master, and the pace of purchases reveal the immediate impact of the advent of Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella as the prince's principal tutor late in 1540.

Calvete's pedagogic plan nevertheless left considerable gaps. The prince's library boasted few books on either law or warfare, and even fewer in any modern language except Spanish. Moreover, Philip received no formal instruction in French, Italian or any of the other languages spoken by his subjects, an important lacuna that reflected a deliberate choice: since Latin was a universal language, Zúñiga believed, 'it is useful to know one language well and thus avoid having to learn them all'. The emperor agreed: 'See how many territories you must rule, and how many components there are, and how distant they are from one another, speaking so many languages,' he reminded his son in 1543. Therefore,

> You must understand them and be understood by them, and to that end nothing could be more necessary or universal than the Latin language. That is why I strongly encourage you to work to learn it so that later on you are not

> afraid to speak it fluently. It would do you no harm to know some French too, but I would not want you to abandon one in order to study the other.[25]

As a result, Philip never entirely mastered French. He rarely spoke it, and when in 1576 the French ambassador read out a letter from his king, Philip later confessed to a minister 'to tell the truth, I understood little of it' because 'I do not understand French well'.[26] Conversely, Philip's broad and deep exposure to humanist learning explains not only his facility with Latin but also his forceful style when writing Spanish, as well as his self-confidence (not to say arrogance) when discussing almost every aspect of intellectual endeavour: architecture with architects, geography and history with ministers and academics, and even theology with popes.

The adolescent prince took part in more complex recreations than before. His household accounts record the purchase of chess sets, playing cards and 'gloves to play *pelota* [an early form of tennis]'. He also enjoyed the humour of fools and jesters: between 1537 and 1540, the prince's treasurer made several payments to 'Jerónimo the Turk', the prince's first jester, and in 1542 he bought two candles 'to replace the two in His Highness's chamber that Perico the Fool broke in pieces'.[27] Philip also enjoyed music. His chapel included a choir consisting of two trebles, two countertenors, two tenors, four counter-basses and two organists; and in 1540 he had the organs in his chapel repaired and always took them with him on his travels. The compositions and performances of Antonio Cabezón delighted the prince so much that he took the blind organist with him to northern Europe in 1548–51. He also employed the composer Luis de Narváez, who taught him and his sisters to play the vihuela.[28] Philip's household included a dancing master, who taught all the royal children, and a painter who instructed the prince as he filled 'a book of large sheets which His Highness requested for his paintings'. Some early paintings have survived in the margins of one of Philip's own books, probably done in 1540–1 – the same time that he acquired his 'book of large sheets' (see plate 4).[29] Thanks to these various activities, the cost of the prince's household almost doubled between 1540 and 1543, by which time it numbered some 240 persons, and it required 27 mules and six carts to transport his possessions whenever Philip moved between the royal residences in Madrid, Toledo, Aranjuez, Segovia and Valladolid.

Everywhere Philip went, he was now preceded by his personal standard, a mark of the elevated status that distinguished him from others at court, and he sported his own coat of arms and his own seal (prominently displayed on the rich leather bindings of his books). He had his own motto: *Nec spe nec metu* ('With neither hope nor fear'). In March 1541, he donned armour for the first time and 'ran at the ring' at the head of a team of five knights 'wearing a mask,

and although many others competed, he won the prize outright'. Five months later, Zúñiga reported, 'His Highness is doing very well, and with great desire (if he receives permission) to serve with his father' on the emperor's amphibious expedition against Algiers ('permission' that Charles denied).[30] Three months later, the emperor announced that his son would marry Princess María Manuela of Portugal, the daughter of Charles's sister and Isabella's brother, and so Philip's first cousin on both sides of the family.

The prince had been thinking about procreation since he was a boy of eight: when Doña Estefania de Requesens, the wife of his governor, gave birth to a daughter, Philip told her that he wanted all her daughters 'to become ladies-in-waiting to his wife'.[31] After the death of the empress, Charles began to spend more time with his son, instructing him in the art of government both as they toured the crown of Aragon and after their return to Madrid. The emperor no doubt intended to make these lessons a regular fixture, but when Francis I declared war on him again in 1543 Charles left Spain to take personal charge of operations. This time, unlike in 1539, he overrode the laws of the kingdom (which forbade anyone under the age of 20 to rule):

> By virtue of our own certain knowledge, will, and absolute royal authority, which in this matter we wish to use and do use as king and sovereign lord, not recognizing any temporal superior, we choose and select, constitute and nominate Prince Philip to be our lieutenant general and governor of our kingdoms and lordships [of Spain].[32]

The threshold of power

Because he would not be able to provide any more lessons in person, just before he left Spain Charles wrote three sets of Instructions to assist his son to discharge his arduous new responsibilities. A 'General Instruction', dated 1 May 1543, listed Philip's powers and duties as governor of Castile. It required him to perform some of his devotions in public; to 'take his meals in public; to reserve some hours of the day to hear those who come to speak to him; and to receive the petitions and memorials that they give him'. It also stipulated that the prince must only take decisions with the approval of a triumvirate composed of Tavera, Cobos and Fernando de Valdés, president of the council of Castile. That same day, the emperor signed another document entitled 'Restrictions on the powers of the prince', which listed numerous matters which Philip could *not* decide, despite the apparently full powers conceded in the General Instruction. Most of them related to the royal patronage – 'you must not issue certificates legitimizing the children of clerics'; 'I reserve for myself matters arising from ecclesiastical vacancies' – but some were broader: 'Do not

promise rewards, because I do not do so'; 'Do not grant anyone jurisdiction over native Americans without my express permission'.[33]

On 4 May Charles prepared more personal Instructions for his son, writing out in his own hand 'what I know and understand about how you must comport yourself in governing these kingdoms'. The emperor began by noting that 'although you are very young for such a demanding position, there have nevertheless been people no older than you whose courage, virtue and good judgment were such that their deeds surpassed their scant years and experience'. He continued:

> Above all else you must be resolute in two things. First and most important: always keep your eyes on God, and submit to Him all the tasks and concerns that face you, and sacrifice yourself. Be very ready to do this. Second: believe and accept all good advice. These two resolutions will enable you to overcome your lack of maturity and experience, and you will undertake things in such a way that you will soon be capable and experienced enough to govern well and wisely.

Charles then provided a series of specific injunctions. 'Never order justice to be done if you feel anger or partiality, especially in criminal matters.' 'Avoid being angry and never do anything in anger.' 'Be very careful not to promise anything, either orally or in writing, or to raise expectations for the future.' 'Grant audiences when required, and be affable in your answers and patient when listening; and appoint fixed hours during which people can see and talk to you.'[34]

The emperor next turned to personal matters, and his tone became sharper. 'You need to change your way of life and your relations with other people,' he bluntly stated. 'As I told you in Madrid' (an allusion to earlier intimate conversations between father and son),

> you should not think that your studies will prolong your childhood. Instead, they will make you grow in honour and reputation so that, despite your youth, you will be taken for a man. Becoming a man early is not a matter of thinking or desiring it, or of being fully grown, but solely of having the judgment and knowledge necessary to act as a man, and as a wise, sane, good and honourable man. For this to happen, everyone needs education, good examples and discourses.

'Until now,' the emperor continued relentlessly,

> your only companions have been children and your pleasures have been those enjoyed in their company. From now on, you must only keep these

> people around you in order to tell them how they are to serve you. Your principal company must be that of older and mature men who have virtues, good conversation and deportment; and let the recreation you take be with such people and in moderation, because God created you to rule and not to relax.

In particular, Charles chided his son for 'spending so much time with jesters' and ordered him to 'pay less attention to Fools' (a counsel that Philip either could not or would not obey).

Finally, the emperor turned to the subject of sex. 'You will soon be married' and, Charles warned,

> Inasmuch as you are of young and tender age and I have no other son, and I do not wish to have others, it is very important that you restrain your desires and do not make excessive efforts at this early stage, which could lead to physical damage, because apart from the fact that it can be dangerous both for the body's growth and for its strength, it can often lead to such weakness that it interferes with conceiving children and even causes death, as it did with Prince Juan [of Trastámara], which was how I came to inherit these kingdoms.

The emperor shared the common (but erroneous) belief that the heir of Ferdinand and Isabella, who in all other respects should serve as Philip's role model, had died as a result of immoderate sexual activity with his young wife; and he had no intention of letting Philip follow suit. Charles had evidently established that his son was still a virgin and also extracted a promise from him to remain that way: 'I am certain that you have told me the truth about the past, and that you have kept your word to me [to be celibate] until you are married'. Now he demanded that the prince show equal moderation after his marriage.

> You must be very restrained when you are in your wife's company, and since that is somewhat difficult, the solution is to keep you away from her as much as possible; and so I require and request that once you have consummated the marriage, you plead some illness and keep away from her and do not visit her again so quickly or so often. And when you do return, let it be for only a short while.

Charles backed up this remarkable demand by instructing his ministers to compel the young couple's compliance.

> In order to make certain there are no shortcomings in this matter, although from now on you no longer need a tutor, in this matter alone I want Don Juan

> [de Zúñiga] to continue [in this capacity.] According to what I told you in his presence, in this matter you must do only what he tells you. By these instructions, even though it may anger you, I order him not to refrain from saying and doing all he can to see that you comply.

To make absolutely sure that his son would obey, Charles also ordered the duke of Gandía (the future St Francis Borgia) to keep his son's future wife 'away from you except for the times when your life and health can stand it'. It is hard to imagine a situation more likely to create a serious complex about sex in a fifteen-year-old boy.

On 12 November 1543, dressed 'entirely in white, so that he looked like a dove', Philip met his bride-to-be and for some hours they danced and dined; afterwards they rested until 4 a.m. when Tavera married them; and only then did they retire to the princess's chamber. But not for long: 'after being together for two and a half hours Don Juan de Zúñiga entered the room and hauled the prince off to another bed in his own chamber'. Moreover, after less than a week of carefully rationed time together, the couple travelled to their separate beds in Valladolid where, 'after a few days of sleeping apart, His Highness developed a most painful rash'. Zúñiga oscillated between relief that this meant 'he will not be sleeping with his wife' and concern that 'the rash continues, and it is something he has never had in his life'. After his rash abated, Philip showed coolness – some said aversion – towards his bride: 'When they are together, His Highness makes it seem as if he is there against his will, and as soon as she sits down, he gets up again and leaves'.[35] Both Charles and Zúñiga reproached the prince about this: it never seems to have occurred to them that the humiliating regime they had imposed made María Manuela seem like a lethal weapon to her young husband.

Charles increased his son's embarrassment even further by the way he communicated his 4 May instructions: 'Don Juan de Zúñiga will present this document to you. Read it in his presence so that he can remind you of its contents whenever he deems it necessary.' The emperor also suggested that his son might show the document to Silíceo, whose judgement and experience he extolled. It seems unlikely that Charles insisted on this procedure simply to humiliate his son (although that would have been the inevitable outcome); rather it was meant to deceive the two ministers named into thinking that he had opened his heart to them, as well as to Philip. In fact Charles had much more information to impart, and on 6 May he signed a further holograph letter to his son: 'I am writing and sending you this secret document which will be for you alone. You must therefore keep it secret, under lock and key where neither your wife nor any other living person can see it'. It was the most remarkable piece of political advice ever committed to paper by an early modern ruler.

This time Charles began with an apology: 'I am so sorry to have placed the kingdoms and dominions that I will bequeath to you in such extreme need'. Worse, if he died, 'my finances will be in such a state that you will encounter many problems because you will see how small and encumbered my revenues are just now'. Nevetheless, the emperor added defiantly, 'Bear in mind that what I have done has been necessary to safeguard my honour, because without that I would be less able to sustain myself, and I would have less to leave you.' Philip's first secret lesson from his father was that 'honour and reputation' were far more important than money: if he should lose his life in their defence, Charles declared grandiloquently, 'I will have the satisfaction of having lost it while doing my duty and helping you'. Next, the emperor shared the military strategy he intended to follow against France and its allies, and where he planned to find the troops and treasure to put it into effect – once again so that his son would know what to do 'if I should either be taken prisoner or detained on this journey'.[36]

Charles recognized that political affairs 'are so confused and uncertain that I do not know how to express them', because 'they are full of confusion and contradictions, either because of the state of affairs or because of conscience'. Therefore, in all matters of policy, Philip should 'always hold on to what is most certain, which is God'. Next came a most remarkable passage, preceded by another injunction that it 'must be for you alone and you must keep it very secret': a searing analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the ministers on whose opinions the prince would have to rely 'if God should call me to Him during this journey'.

The emperor again referred his son to 'what I told you in Madrid' about 'the animosities, alliances and almost cabals that were forming or had already been formed among my ministers' – but now he provided more detail because although each of his senior ministers 'is the leader of a faction, I still want them to work together so that you will not fall into the hands of any one of them'. Therefore, Charles insisted, 'do not place yourself, now or ever, in the hands of any individual. Always discuss your affairs with many, and do not become tied or obliged to any of them, because while it will save you time it is not in your interest.' He then reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of each councillor in turn, starting with Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, duke of Alba. Although the emperor considered Alba 'the best we currently have in these kingdoms' when it came to military and diplomatic matters, he had deliberately excluded him from the prince's committee of advisers:

> It is best not to involve grandees in the government of the kingdom, and so I did not want to include the duke, which has left him not a little aggrieved. Ever since I have known him, I have found that he has great aspirations and

> seeks to become as powerful as possible, even though at first he came on the scene genuflecting, all humble and modest; so just think how he will behave around you, my son, because you are younger. You must avoid involving him or other grandees in the inner circles of government because they will try to take advantage of you by any means they can, and that will cost you a great deal later on.

Philip followed this advice throughout his reign: he never admitted Alba or any other grandee to 'the inner circles of government'.

The emperor next evaluated the other ministers to whose care he had entrusted the prince. Cobos 'does not work as hard as he used to do', Charles complained, but nevertheless, 'he has experience of all my affairs and is very knowledgeable about them' so that 'you would do well to deal with him as I do, never alone and not giving him more authority than is contained in his Instructions'. The emperor devoted several pages to Cobos, including some detailed suggestions on how to 'manage' him – how to reward him yet still keep him hungry for more – before turning to Zúñiga. Although he 'may seem somewhat harsh to you', Charles advised his son, 'do not hold it against him'.

> You must realize that since all the people who have surrounded you in the past and who currently surround you are indulgent and want to please you, this may make Don Juan seem harsh; but if he had been like the others, everything would always have been the way you wanted, and that is not good for anyone, not even older people, let alone youths without the knowledge or self-control that come with age and experience.

And yet, the emperor continued, no one was perfect. 'I have two concerns about Don Juan. One is that he is somewhat biased, mainly against Cobos but also against the duke of Alba . . . His other fault is this: he is somewhat greedy.' Nevertheless, the emperor concluded, 'you will not find anyone who can advise you better, and more to my liking that these two': Cobos and Zúñiga.

Charles was far more critical of the other ministers who would advise his son. For example, contradicting what he had written two days before, he now had little good to say about Silíceo: 'We all know him to be a good man; but he was certainly not – nor is he now – the most suitable person for your education, because he has been too anxious to please you.' Now, he is 'your confessor, and it would not be good if he wanted to indulge you in matters of conscience as he has done in your education. So far there have been no problems,' Charles continued, 'but from now on there could be some very considerable ones.' The emperor therefore recommended that his son 'should appoint a good friar to be your confessor'.

Charles's holograph instructions – so direct, so personal, so perceptive – made a tremendous impression on his son. 'I remember a lesson that His Majesty [Charles] taught me very many years ago,' he explained to a councillor in 1559, when he refused to promise future promotion to a supplicant, 'and things have gone well for me when I followed it and very badly when I did not' – a clear reference to Charles's advice sixteen years before: 'Be very careful not to promise anything, either orally or in writing, or to raise expectations for the future.' In 1560, when interrogated by the Inquisition, he explicitly cited 'the instructions that my lord the emperor, who is in glory, gave me when he left these realms in 1543, in which (among other things) he ordered me to make sure that prelates resided in their dioceses'. Again, in 1574, when Philip thought he might leave Spain and leave his wife as regent, one of his ministers suggested basing his Instructions for her on those Philip had drawn up when he had left for England twenty years before; but the king preferred 'those from the time when I began to govern, in the year 1543' because 'the papers of advice that the emperor gave me then, written in his own hand' contained so much useful information.[37]

'His Highness received the Instructions that Your Majesty sent him,' Zúñiga reported to the emperor in June 1543, 'and has begun to follow them with great care and diligence in everything he needs to do'; while Tavera assured his master that 'the prince has begun to exercise the powers that Your Majesty sent him, and in what we have seen so far he shows far more care and expertise in public affairs than one would expect of someone his age'. Although Charles had intended his son to sign in his own name only 'the orders and warrants that concern his own household', Zúñiga discovered 'that Prince Juan [of Trastámara], when he dealt with his estates and when he signed other documents, wrote *Yo, el príncipe* ["I the prince"]', and he showed Cobos 'many documents signed by Prince Juan' to demonstrate 'that this was the normal style of the princes of Castile'. Without waiting for imperial approval, the two ministers resolved that Philip 'should henceforth do the same'.[38] 'Felipito' had come of age.

CHAPTER TWO

A Renaissance prince, 1543–1551

Governor of Spain

As 'Governor of Spain', Philip received a stream of letters from his absent father filled with commands and supplications. Thus in October 1543, at the end of a letter pleading for money to sustain his war with France, Charles added a postscript in his own hand that came close to blackmail: 'My son: I'm sure that when you see what I have written here, and see how much it affects me, you will do everything that a loyal son is obliged to do so as not to abandon your father in this situation . . . You must not fail to send me the soldiers and money that I have requested.' Barely two weeks later the emperor picked up his quill again to maintain the pressure: 'My son,' he crooned after another long plea for soldiers and money from Spain, 'once again I beg you to show me what a loyal son you are.'[1]

No doubt encouraged by his Spanish advisers, who worried that too much fiscal pressure might provoke unrest, Philip deployed the defence used by servants of Habsburg monarchs everywhere: 'I obey but I do not execute [*Obedezco pero no cumplo*]'. First the prince procrastinated, sometimes letting several weeks pass before answering his father, 'because it was necessary to consult the councils and other advisers' appointed by his father 'in my presence' where they debated the best response; and when he eventually addressed the emperor's request of October 1543 (quoted above) after four months' delay, for the first time he defied his father:

> I beg Your Majesty as earnestly as I can to take what I say in the same spirit as I write it. I do not seek to circumscribe Your Majesty's ambitious plans, which are the fruit of your Imperial valour, but to remind you of the current state of affairs, the misery in which Christendom finds itself, the exhaustion of your kingdoms, the harm that follows from major wars (however justified they

> may be), and the danger in which we find ourselves, with enemy fleets at hand and few resources with which to resist them.

The only realistic strategy in the current situation, 'if Your Majesty wishes to avoid an irreparable disaster', Philip boldly concluded, was to make peace on all fronts.[2]

By the time this defiant letter arrived, Charles had already put his 'ambitious plans' into action and invaded France, and within a few months he succeeded beyond his wildest dreams: by September 1544 his army had advanced to within fifty miles of Paris, forcing Francis I to make a hasty peace. The emperor was generous in his moment of triumph: to secure a lasting settlement he offered to cede to his adversary one of the territories that caused contention between them. He promised the French king that his younger son, the duke of Orléans, could marry either Ferdinand's daughter, with Milan as her dowry, or Philip's sister María, with the Netherlands as her dowry; and asked his son to discuss these alternatives with both María and his Spanish advisers.

The prince was well placed to conduct both sets of negotiations. Cobos had recently praised the prince's administrative and diplomatic skills in a letter to the emperor. 'His knowledge and capacity have improved,' he observed, so that Philip achieves what to others might

> seem impossible, thanks to his great understanding and exalted comprehension. His pastimes are a complete and constant dedication to work and the important affairs of your kingdoms. He is always contemplating and discussing matters of good government and justice, without leaving room for favouritism, or idleness, or flattery, or any vice. His normal dealings and conversations are always on such subjects, with mature advisers.

Nor, Cobos continued, did Philip allow his 'mature advisers' to dominate him. For example, at a council meeting, he had 'asked the duke of Alba something about the war with France and the duke, with his habitual impetuosity, replied that as long as he and the emperor were alive, they would soon take care of France'. At this (no doubt recalling his father's advice never to let the duke gain the upper hand), Philip 'very quietly, but with all his majesty, said to Alba "Apart from the emperor, I take second place to no one. In my opinion, anyone who does not understand that, and boasts in my presence, either does not know me or is trying to displease me." And with that His Highness turned his back.'[3] The duke spoke no more.

As soon as he received his father's charge to discuss the alternative of sacrificing either Milan or the Netherlands, Philip made himself the sole conduit

between Charles and his sister because, he noted smugly, 'she will confide in no one more than she does in me', and he spent the next two weeks alone conversing with her. Afterwards he convened the council of State, where he adopted a 'divide and rule' procedure that would form a hallmark of his subsequent administrative style: 'I ordered that everyone should give his own opinion' in the meeting.[4] Five ministers (including Zúñiga) favoured retaining the Netherlands for a combination of economic, strategic and above all dynastic reasons: the Netherlands formed part of Charles's patrimony (whereas the duchy of Milan had been acquired only recently), and therefore Charles must not surrender them. Instead, the duke of Orléans should marry Ferdinand's daughter and rule Milan. Five other ministers (including Alba and Cobos) argued the opposite: 'The duchy is essential not only for the defence and preservation of Naples and Sicily, but also for the security and tranquillity of these kingdoms, and to leave the way clear for Your Majesty to travel to Germany and the Netherlands, and to raise and send troops and other resources from Spain and Germany' to defend any other part of the Monarchy in case of attack. These ministers saw Milan as the hub and heart of the empire, and they convinced the prince, who urged his father to sacrifice the Netherlands and allow Orléans to marry his sister. In the event, Charles rejected his son's advice and instead declared that Orléans would marry Ferdinand's daughter and acquire Milan: only the duke's death a few months later allowed him to avoid this concession, thereby perpetuating the strategic overstretch inherent in his empire.[5]

Although overruled on this issue, Philip soon established his independence in lesser matters. Scarcely three months after the emperor left Spain in 1543, his tutor reported that the prince 'understands everything he reads in Latin, although his studies go more slowly both because of the administrative tasks Your Majesty has entrusted to him and because he devotes a lot of time to weapons drill and horsemanship'. Perhaps the early end of his formal education explains Philip's immature handwriting: even his earliest letters are written in a regular but ill-formed script (see plate 5).[6] Philip's weapons drill and horsemanship also brought their share of disappointments. In spring 1544 the prince and a group of companions went to an island in the river Pisuerga near Valladolid to take part in a tournament based upon an episode from the popular chivalric novel *Amadis of Gaul*; but the boat carrying one of the teams sank under the weight of all the armoured warriors. Although the boat was refloated and the bedraggled warriors set forth for the island tryst once more, it sank once again and the tournament had to be abandoned. Two years later, in another attempt to replay the adventures of Amadis on an island near Guadalajara, Philip injured both his legs in combat and for a time had to walk with a cane. In the words of one of his jousting companions, 'Where posture in

the saddle is concerned, no man ever outclassed my master King Philip' – but, he added waspishly, 'he never used to break many lances'.[7]

Despite the time spent in administration and chivalric deeds, Philip became a voracious reader. His household treasurer had to purchase extra candles expressly for 'His Highness's quarters, on the days when he studied there intensely' and for 'the nights when he studied intensely in his chamber'.[8] The fact that the treasurer repeated 'intensely [*apretadamente*]' to justify the heavy expenditure on candles testifies to the prince's uncommon zeal in reading. Thanks to some eclectic purchases – such as the political and military treatises of Machiavelli (all of which would later bear the inscription 'prohibited by the Index') and the works of distinguished European humanists such as Pico de la Mirandola (on the immortality of the soul), Marsilio Ficino (on faith) and Johannes Reuchlin (on Cabalism) – and to presentation copies of books dedicated to him, the prince's library grew to over 800 volumes in 1548 and it included works written and published all over western Europe.

Youthful defiance

Although such praise of the prince's precocious erudition pleased his father, in one of his letters to Zúñiga in 1544, Charles noted warily that 'You do not tell me anything about what else my son is doing. If that is because there is nothing to say, I would be delighted; but if it is because you fear it would bore me, please do not hesitate to tell me about any matter that I should know about, and how I should correct it.'[9] This invitation seems to have provoked an avalanche of complaints, because two months later Charles sent Zúñiga a comprehensive reply that reviewed 'the little things that have started in my absence'. The emperor wisely decided to overlook some of these 'little things'. Thus although 'it would be better if he did not return so late when he goes hunting', or neglect his studies,

> Seeing that he is now married, and busy with affairs of state, and past the age where it might be worth urging him to do more than he wishes to do of his own free will, it seems to me that he should be allowed to do what he wants, and not nag him so much that he becomes irritated with everything.

The emperor nevertheless decided to nag his son about four 'little things': 'the disorderly manner and the time wasted in getting up and going to bed, and in getting dressed and undressed'; 'the lack of attention he shows in devotions and confessions'; 'the coolness he shows to his wife in public'; and above all 'what happened at the house of Perejón', the prince's jester, 'and going out late at night'. Charles ordered that 'if this gets worse', Zúñiga must immediately report it.[10]

In his brilliant study of Philip's early years, José Luis Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero plausibly suggested that the 'little things' that preoccupied Charles and Zúñiga formed part of a 'youthful defiance' by the prince against their intrusive and humiliating attempts at control. For example, Castilian law clearly stated that marriage brought with it independence from paternal authority, and yet Charles compelled his son to live apart not only from his wife but also from his beloved sisters. The effects were the exact opposite of what the emperor intended, because the prince apparently began an affair at precisely this time with Isabel Osorio, a lady-in-waiting first of his mother and then of his sisters.[11]

The entry for the year 1589 in the chronicle of the king's reign compiled by the well-informed courtier Luis Cabrera de Córdoba stated: 'This year Doña Isabel de Osorio, who claimed to be the wife of King Philip II, died'. Some years later a political treatise composed by another well-informed courtier praised Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip's most trusted adviser, for 'his great efforts to free the king from the love of Doña Isabel Osorio' and bringing the affair to an end.[12] Philip certainly showed Doña Isabel remarkable favour (especially given that her ancestors included a rabbi and a leading Comunero). In the early years of his reign he signed several warrants granting her money and jewels, and at her death Doña Isabel boasted possessions worth 60,000 ducats. Above all, Philip sold her at a low price some royal villages near Burgos (her home town), which she turned into a landed estate – Saldañuela – where she built a fine palace known locally (surely not by accident) as 'The whore's house [*la casa de la puta*]'. Carvings in every external window frame show an unmistakable likeness of Philip gazing at Isabel. The surviving evidence thus suggests an affair with the prince, probably beginning in 1545 and lasting at least until he left Spain in 1548.

Despite all this, and despite Charles's complaint about his son's 'coolness' towards his wife, in July 1545 Maria Manuela gave birth to a son, named 'Carlos' in honour of his grandfather. Four days later, she died. Her death left Philip devastated, and he retired to a monastery to mourn. He did not write to his father for a month 'because the anguish and regret caused by such a great loss did not allow me to do so'. He only returned to public life, he told Charles, 'to avoid abandoning the affairs of these kingdoms that Your Majesty entrusted to me'; and even then 'although I returned to the palace I have kept myself to myself, although always attending to all pending business'. There is no reason to doubt the depth of Philip's 'anguish and regret': his wife was just seventeen and she died bearing his child – the direct consequence of the sexual intimacy that his father had urged him to moderate. His only consolation was that 'I find the Infante [Don Carlos] well, and I understand he is improving every day'.[13]

Philip, too, found his situation 'improving every day', as the 'older and mature men' whom his father had appointed to guide him disappeared. Tavera,

the senior councillor, died in August 1546, followed ten months later by Zúñiga, his most 'faithful councillor' and moderator of his sex life. Alba left to join the emperor in Germany, while illness forced Cobos to retire to his estates, where he died. In June 1546 Charles formally recognized the inevitable: as a prelude to investing Philip as duke of Milan, an Imperial fief, he signed a declaration that henceforth the new duke 'would be emancipated and free from our paternal control'.[14]

The prince lost no time in exploiting his 'emancipation'. His letters to Charles became more outspoken. Thus in December 1546 he informed his father that all revenues from Castile for the next four years had been anticipated and spent, so that 'we have reached the end of the line. We do not know from where nor how to find ways and means of finding money. The problem has immersed us all in a far greater anxiety than you can imagine.'[15] Philip also now created his own administrative cadres, seeking to fill vacant positions by promoting men whom he knew personally even though this created tensions in the central government between those whose first loyalty was to the emperor and those who owed everything to him. The prince also took an important institutional initiative: he created an archive for the crown of Castile in the castle of Simancas, a royal fortress close to Valladolid, and also ordered the transfer there of all books belonging to his royal ancestors, apparently with the intention of creating there a royal library. His 'youthful defiance' was over.

A blueprint for empire

In 1547, Philip returned to Aragon where for six months he presided over the Cortes General of Catalonia, Valencia and Aragon. Since each assembly met separately, the prince had to pass from one building to another in order to hear the grievances, and to request taxes, from each. It took him until Christmas and, according to a member of his entourage, 'I saw His Highness spend whole nights without sleep until he had concluded all items of business.'[16] No sooner had the Cortes ended than the emperor decided that both his older children, Philip and María, should leave Spain and join him in Germany and he dictated a long document – subsequently known as his Political Testament – that contained his thoughts on the states and rulers Philip would meet on his travels, and on their place in the Habsburg world. It offered the prince a veritable blueprint for empire and, as with the Instructions he had received five years before, for the rest of his life Philip strove to attain the goals laid out by his father.

The emperor began, as he had done in his papers of advice in 1539 and 1543, by urging the prince to 'submit all your desires and actions to the will of

God' and to make the defence of the Catholic faith his primary responsibility. He then regretted the cost of 'the wars that I have been forced to fight so many times and in so many places' to defend the empire – even though, he noted with a trace of smugness, 'with God's help (for which let Him be thanked) I have conserved, defended and added others of great quality and importance'. The primary need, therefore, was to assure them a period of peace in which to recover. However,

> avoiding war and keeping it at bay is not always in the power of those who want it . . . especially of those who rule realms as great and as numerous and as far-flung as God, in His goodness, has given me and which, if He pleases, I shall leave to you. Rather this depends on the good or ill will of neighbours and other states.

So Philip must be ready to fight, if necessary, to preserve what was his.

Charles therefore proceeded to survey the prevailing international situation, and especially the challenges that his son could expect to encounter. 'Common sense and experience,' he began,

> show that unless you watch and take the trouble to understand the actions of other states and rulers, and maintain friends and informants in all areas, it will be difficult if not impossible to live in peace, or to avoid, oppose, and remedy anything that is attempted against you and your possessions . . . especially since (as I have already noted) they are separated one from another, and the object of envy.

Therefore, 'your first and most secure friendship and trust' must be with Ferdinand, Charles's brother and designated successor as Holy Roman Emperor. On the one hand, his uncle Ferdinand would be a valuable councillor; on the other, as emperor, his support would prove essential for Philip's control over northern Italy and the Low Countries – both Imperial fiefs – and for the maintenance of easy and secure communication between them.

Next, Philip must always maintain good relations with the pope – although, as in his earlier papers of advice, the emperor recognized that this was easier said than done. 'You already know how the present pope, Paul III, has treated me,' Charles complained; and although he expressed the hope that a change of pontiff would improve matters, he identified two areas that would continue to produce conflict: papal claims to suzerainty over Naples and Sicily, and royal patronage of the Spanish Church. He therefore advised his son to 'behave with the submission of a good son of the Church' towards future pontiffs, 'and without giving them any just cause for offence with you. But do this

without any prejudice to the pre-eminences, prosperity and peace of the said kingdoms.' Philip must give nothing away, not even to the head of the Catholic Church.

As in his previous papers of advice, Charles presented the French as the greatest potential security threat and claimed that, although he had always tried to live in peace with them, their kings had 'made many peaces and truces with me, none of which they kept – as is well known – except during the periods when they could not renew the war or wanted to wait for an opportunity to harm me clandestinely'. No doubt, he mused, they would continue to do so, trying to regain the territories and rights he had compelled them to renounce – both in the Low Countries and in Italy – by earlier treaties; but Philip must stand fast. The emperor could see only one lasting solution: Philip must marry a French princess in return for a commitment to drop all contentious claims and evacuate all the territories that they had occupied, including those of allies such as the duke of Savoy.

In relation to Spain's overseas empire, Charles repeated his concerns about the manner in which the native Americans had been subjugated by their conquerors and urged his son to find a balance between 'your royal preeminence, and the best interests of the said native Americans'. Finally, Charles admitted that he did not know what to do about the Netherlands: should he bequeath them, along with Spain, to his son or should he give them to María and her future husband, Maximilian, his brother Ferdinand's son? He promised Philip that he would not make a final decision 'until you can come here, and see the country for yourself'.

Charles remained silent about one other relevant item. Although he showered Philip with directives on how to treat other members of the dynasty, he failed to mention that the prince had a brother. In 1546 the emperor had an affair with the daughter of an official of the city of Regensburg, Barbara Blomberg – a teenager exactly Philip's age – who gave birth to his son. The emperor's officials bought her silence and spirited the boy away to be brought up in secrecy by foster parents – but Philip knew nothing of all this until after the emperor died (see chapter 7).

Even as Philip read and digested this complex document, his father changed his plans in one vital respect. Although 'we had resolved that the Infanta María should come here with you', he explained to his son, now he thought that 'it would be better if Prince Maximilian, my nephew, goes to Spain and consummates the marriage that has been agreed upon', and then stays on as regent. Philip must remain in Spain until his cousin could arrive and receive instruction in 'whatever you think he should know', and to 'meet and learn about the grandees and other gentlemen who come to court, and about the councils and ministers with whom he will have to deal' – in other words, Philip must provide

the same sort of intimate advice to Maximilian that he had himself received in the emperor's Secret Instructions five years before.[17]

The Grand Tour

In October 1548, having initiated his new brother-in-law into the mysteries of government, Philip was free to leave Spain for the first time. Naturally he did not travel alone: his entourage included many who would be prominent during the first half of his reign. Some older men, like the duke of Alba, had already made their mark but others belonged to a younger generation that now appeared on the public stage for the first time: the duke of Sessa, who would govern Milan and command the Mediterranean fleet; the count of Olivares, future ambassador in Rome and viceroy of Naples and Sicily; the count of Feria, later ambassador in England and Philip's leading adviser on English affairs; and the count of Luna, later Spanish ambassador at both the Imperial court and the council of Trent. These men forged a close bond with each other as well as with the prince while they toured Europe together; and many also became part of the patronage network being built by Ruy Gómez – a Portuguese gentlemen born in 1516 who had served the empress as a page and would become, according to contemporaries, 'the greatest Favourite the world has seen' until 'eventually he handled all business of war and peace'.[18]

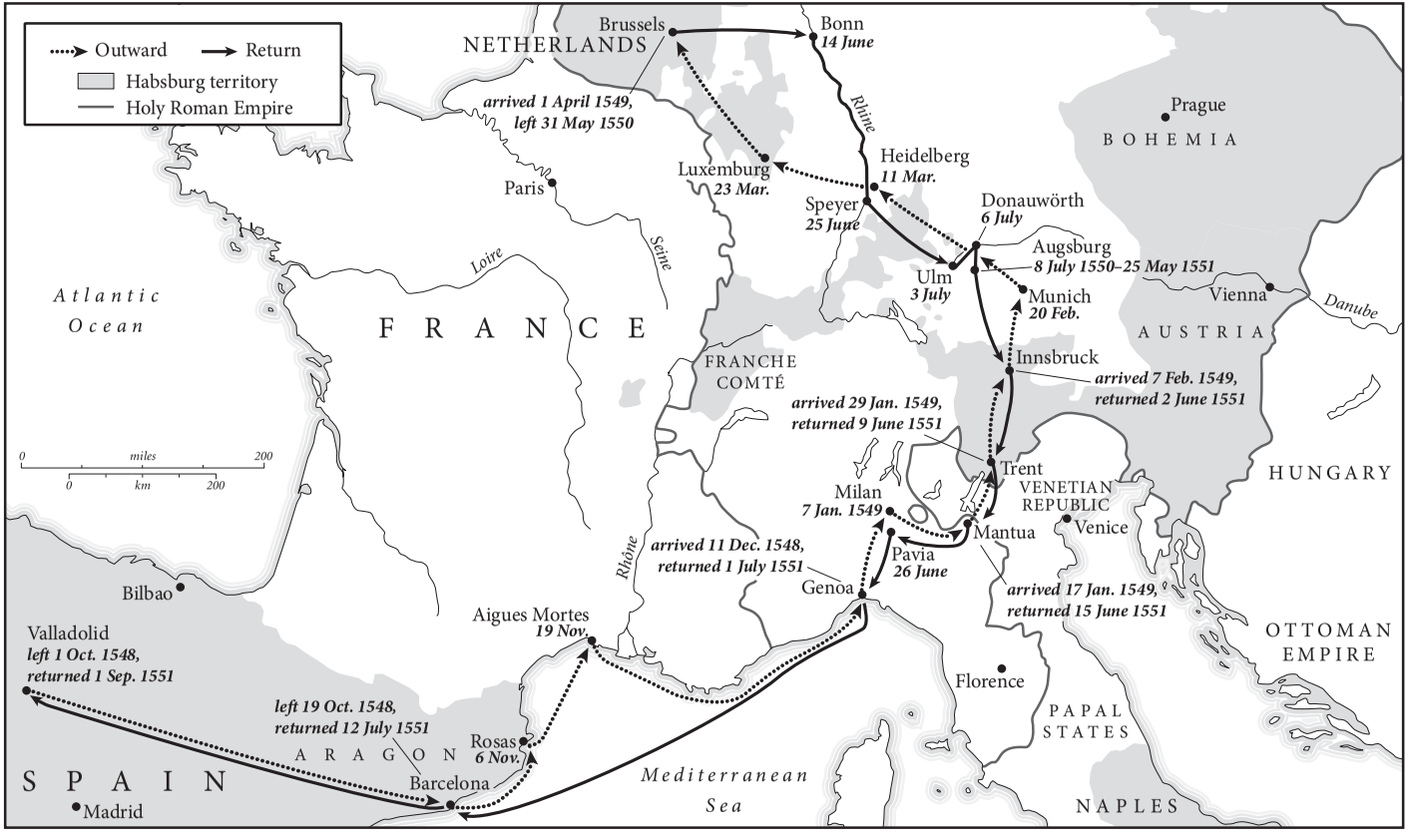
On 1 November 1548, after considerable delays due to bad weather, the prince and his distinguished entourage, which numbered almost 500, left Catalonia on a fleet of galleys. According to Calvete de Estrella, who accompanied the prince and later published a detailed account of what he called *The most fortunate journey*, Philip proved to be 'a good sailor' throughout his first sea voyage, which lasted a month, until he and his exhausted entourage landed near Genoa. All eyes were now upon Philip. As the ambassador of the duke of Mantua put it, 'he cannot move, eat, drink or speak without the whole world noticing and writing about it'; and initially his habits created an unfavourable impression. The prince spoke little and so softly that few could hear his words. Worse, as he rode majestically through the streets of Genoa on his way to worship in the cathedral, the city's leading ladies crowded the balconies of the houses along his route, dressed in their finest clothes, waving and curtseying, 'but His Highness made a very poor impression because he failed to acknowledge them by raising his hat or inclining his head, as is the custom'. Even the normally obsequious Vicente Álvarez, a member of the prince's household who also wrote an eyewitness account of the Grand Tour, noted that the prince's behaviour during his tour of northern Italy 'displeased the local people' so that stories spread that 'His Highness was too formal and tongue-tied'.[19]

Philip's popularity began to improve when he reached Trent, a small city-state on the border between Italy and Germany whose prince-bishop had recently hosted a General Council of the Catholic Church. Although the German delegation sent to greet Philip included many Lutherans (his first contact with Protestants), the prince took it in his stride and on each of the following five days participated with both Lutherans and Catholics in prolonged eating and heavy drinking followed by hours of unbridled dancing – albeit Vicente Álvarez affirmed primly that 'the prince did not behave as wantonly as the Cardinals of Augsburg and Trent, who danced and whirled with several ladies'. It was a memorable moment: although he lived for another half-century, during which he met most of the Roman Church's most eminent prelates, including half a dozen future popes, Philip would never again see two cardinals 'dance and whirl with several ladies'.[20]

The problem of the Netherlands

The prince and his companions now hastened to Brussels, where on 1 April 1549 the emperor welcomed the son he had not seen for six years. Although Charles had promised that he would decide nothing concerning his successor in the Netherlands 'until you can come here, and see the country for yourself', while waiting for the prince to arrive, he transformed their constitutional position by persuading the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire to recognize the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands that he ruled, both those he had inherited and those he had acquired, as a single Imperial Circle (*Reichskreis*). This measure enhanced the powers of the central government in Brussels in three important respects: it excluded Imperial jurisdiction except for a handful of small semi-autonomous lordships in the eastern provinces; it granted exemption from the religious compromises that had allowed Lutheranism to flourish in Germany; and it obliged the German members of the Diet to defend the Low Countries should they be attacked. Having united all his Netherlands possessions, new and old, Charles took the momentous – and disastrous – decision that Philip would succeed him as ruler there as well as in Spain.

Philip's arrival in Brussels in April 1549 occasioned pageants and jousts, in which the prince took part – although with some discomfort. On one occasion he ran against Don Luis de Requesens, his former page, who failed to recognize his master 'in the mêlée, and since he wore little padding the prince was knocked out and fell to the ground'. Charles hurried anxiously to his son's side, but 'when they freed him from his armour and found he was not injured, they took him to his bed'. After a brief rest there, Philip returned to the fray (see plate 6).[21] After pleasure came business: the emperor now persuaded the Estates (representative assemblies) of each of the seventeen provinces he ruled not only to recognize his



4. Philip's voyage to the Netherlands in 1548–9 and back in 1550–1. Charles V signed the order for his son to join him in December 1547, but Philip lingered in Spain for ten months, and then travelled in leisurely stages by galley to northern Italy, over the Alps to Austria and south Germany, and joining his father only in April 1549. The prince spent over a year in the Netherlands before accompanying his father to Augsburg, where he lived for ten months before returning to Spain.

son as heir apparent, but also to agree that, notwithstanding their particular privileges, they would henceforth all follow the same succession protocols and choose the same sovereign in order to remain forever united. To cement this innovation, Charles and Philip set out on a tour of the most prosperous provinces – Flanders, Artois, Hainaut and Brabant – where in the presence of the emperor and his sister (and regent), Mary of Hungary, the local authorities of one town and province after another solemnly swore to accept Philip as their next sovereign. The royal party received a rapturous welcome and spectacular entertainment everywhere they went, and Philip repeatedly showed his prowess in jousts.

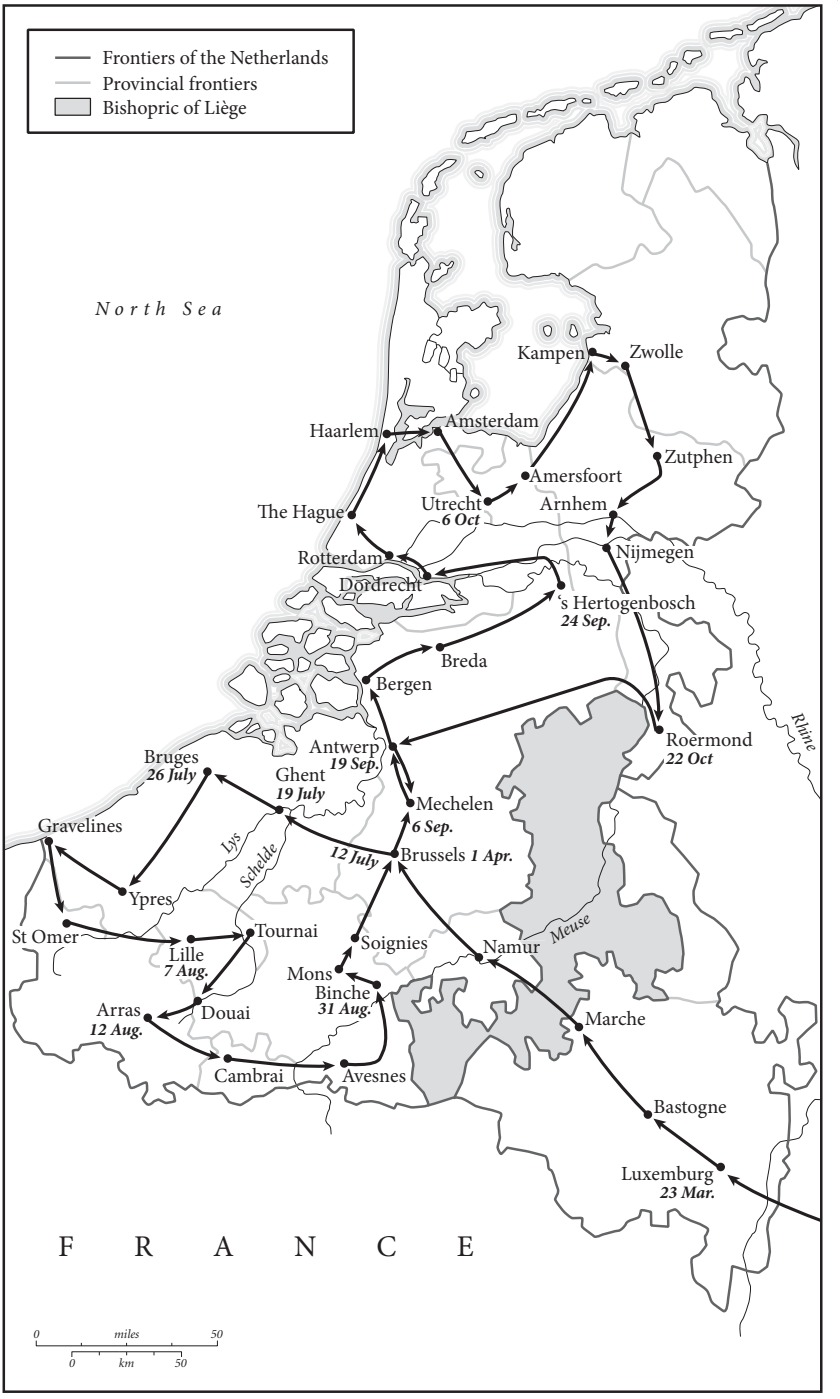
The prince also encountered allegories – in both triumphal arches and plays – that made extravagant claims. Some compared him and his father to David and Solomon, or to Atlas and Hercules; others stressed that although powerful enemies surrounded him, divine and worldly weapons would allow him to prevail. One even showed

> the prince realistically depicted kneeling before God the Father, who took the sword of justice and placed it in his right hand, and then gave him the sceptre held by an angel. He then took a royal crown of gold, adorned with rich pearls and precious stones, and placed it on the prince's head. The prince, very happy with these gifts from the Divine hand, arose and gave Him infinite thanks.[22]

It was heady stuff for someone only just 21 (see plate 7).

The protracted festivities exhausted Charles, who returned to Brussels to recover, but the prince spent the next two months visiting the northern provinces of Holland, Utrecht, Overijssel and Gelderland. As he travelled from city to city, he met hundreds of his future subjects and engaged in endless sightseeing. In Rotterdam, the royal party toured Erasmus's house ('something worth seeing, since such a notable scholar was born there', Calvete noted) and they admired the wooden statue of the great humanist (in 1557 Philip would pay to replace it with one made of polychrome stone). During this stage of *The most fortunate journey*, the prince's constant companions included not only Alba, Feria, Ruy Gómez and other familiar courtiers from Spain, but also important new faces: Prince William of Orange, the marquis of Bergen, Counts Egmont and Hornes, and Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bishop of Arras. Almost all the leading protagonists in the opening phases of the Dutch Revolt travelled around the Netherlands together in the summer of 1549, getting to know each other as they got to know both their prince and his future subjects.

Philip spent the winter of 1549/50 in Brussels, receiving instruction from his father in how to govern effectively, as well as feasting, dancing, hunting and jousting. He also had time to appreciate the cultivated lifestyle of the Low Countries, where his father, Mary of Hungary and Granvelle had all amassed



5. Philip's tour through the Netherlands in 1549. Prince Philip visited the southern provinces of the Netherlands with his father Charles V in July and August 1549, accompanied by courtiers from all parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, and in September and October the northern provinces swore allegiance to him as heir apparent.

impressive art collections. Mary maintained several palaces, where the prince admired her library, her tapestries, her gallery of family portraits by distinguished Italian and Dutch artists and her other works of art (all of which he would inherit). Although at this stage Granvelle lacked the resources to accumulate works of art on this scale, he introduced Philip to the artists he patronized, including Antonis Mor (known in Spain as Antonio Moro), to whom Philip paid 200 ducats in 1549, perhaps for the dashing portrait of him done at this time. When, four years later, Philip wanted a portrait of Mary Tudor, he sent Mor to do it, and when he returned to Spain in 1559 he took Mor with him.

On 1 May 1550, Charles and Philip solemnly commemorated the eleventh anniversary of the empress's death and at the end of the month they left Brussels to meet the Imperial Diet, which Charles had summoned to Augsburg, and to discuss with his relatives an important succession issue. Realizing that a ruler based in Spain would never be able to defend even a united Netherlands effectively, Charles decided to secure for Philip the Imperial title, demanding that Ferdinand name Philip as his successor. This was grossly unfair: Charles had repeatedly assured Ferdinand, 'King of the Romans' (or Imperial heir apparent), that his son Maximilian would succeed him. Deeply hurt by Charles's brusque demand, yet reluctant to offend the elder brother whom he revered, Ferdinand suggested that Philip and his successors could become Imperial Vicar (deputy) in Italy instead – a sensible suggestion that offered Philip far more than he eventually received – but Charles rejected this and instead repeated his demand that Ferdinand recognize Philip, not Maximilian, as his immediate successor.

Matters came to a head one evening in November 1550, when Ferdinand's obstinacy led Charles to exclaim angrily 'we need to establish who is emperor: you or me'.[23] For several weeks after this, the brothers refused to speak to each other. The deadlock was broken by the arrival of Maximilian, who had travelled from Spain to enforce his Imperial claims leaving his pregnant wife, María, as sole regent, and of Mary of Hungary, whom Charles summoned to persuade Ferdinand to change his mind. After weeks of heated discussion, in March 1551 the different parties accepted a series of agreements brokered by Mary. The Imperial succession would alternate between the two branches of the family: Ferdinand would succeed to the title but promised to delegate Imperial powers over Italy to Philip and to work for his nephew's election as King of the Romans; then, once he succeeded to the Imperial title, Philip would secure Maximilian's election as his successor. The prince also undertook to support Ferdinand and Maximilian in the Empire and in Hungary; not to intervene in the government of the Empire except when requested by Ferdinand; and to marry one of Ferdinand's daughters. Although Maximilian grudgingly gave his verbal consent to this succession pact, he refused to sign it; and although Ferdinand signed it, he remained resentful.

Philip seems to have remained oblivious to these tensions, perhaps because Charles and his siblings spoke in French, a language the prince could not understand. When, almost forty years later, a secretary sent him a document praising the piety of his late uncle, 'because I thought Your Majesty would like to read it,' the king replied enthusiastically, 'I knew the Emperor Ferdinand. We spent almost a year together, in 1551, at Augsburg in Germany, in the company of the emperor my father, and I saw a lot of him because we got on very well.'[24] Philip omitted the fact that he also 'saw a lot of' German Protestants then because they thronged the streets of Augsburg while the Diet was in session. For almost a year, Philip ate and drank, danced and jousted, hunted and talked with Lutherans, and his surviving letters to Lutheran rulers from this period exude warmth.

The prince did not set off for Spain until May 1551, largely retracing his earlier route. In June he reached Trent, where he met those who had gathered for the second session of the General Council of the Church. Spanish delegates were numerous, and many of them later entered his service: Dr Martín de Velasco became his leading legal and fiscal adviser; Bishop Alvaro de la Quadra went to Germany and England as his ambassador; the theologians Fray Alonso de Castro and Fray Bartolomé Carranza helped him to re-Catholicize England; and Fray Diego de Chaves would serve as confessor to his wife, his eldest son, and finally to him.

Philip now travelled back through Italy, which he would never see again, and boarded a galley in July 1551 that carried him and his brother-in-law, Maximilian, to Spain. His cousin hastened to join María, who had served as sole regent during her husband's absence, while Philip stayed for three weeks in Barcelona and two weeks in Zaragoza with María, Maximilian and their children – including their daughter Anne, then a toddler, who would become Philip's fourth wife. They then returned to Germany, while Philip travelled to Toro to join his sister Juana, his six-year-old son Don Carlos, and perhaps Doña Isabel Osorio after almost three years of separation.

The prince had become accustomed to the good life during his triennium of travels and he was eager to prolong it. He informed Maximilian from Toro, 'I hope to relax for eight or ten days here, before I go to Madrid to work', and shortly afterwards he boasted that 'so as not to be lazy, we have decided to stage a tournament'. The jousts duly took place on 27 September 1551, with 60 knights on each side, followed by a spectacular banquet. Philip, however, did not participate because he had just received two pieces of dreadful news: the Ottoman fleet had captured Tripoli, one of the last Christian outposts in North Africa, and the French had declared war. Never again would he find time 'to relax for eight or ten days'.[25]

CHAPTER THREE

The changing face of empire, 1551–1558

Nemesis

Prince Philip returned to govern Spain in 1551 with far more experience and authority than before. When one of Charles's nominees to represent him at the council of Trent declined to go, Philip casually informed his father 'we have given some thought to a replacement, and Your Majesty will be advised of our decision'; and when demands for more troops and treasure arrived from his father, the prince first procrastinated and then refused on the ground that 'everything here [in Spain] is exhausted'. He even reproached the emperor for wasting money: 'I beg Your Majesty most humbly to put your affairs in order so that you can reduce expenses, because we have no manner or means to meet them.' This shift in the balance of power did not go unnoticed. As a Spanish courtier wrote crudely to Philip in 1552: 'I beg your Highness to authorize a response to the memorial that I gave you in Madrid, because we all know that you can transact all affairs of state without awaiting permission from [the emperor in] Germany'.[1]

The prince spent most of the winter of 1551–2 in Madrid, which he already seems to have preferred to Valladolid as his administrative base, negotiating with the Cortes of Castile for funds to defend Spain and Spanish Italy. But in April 1552 Henry II invaded Lorraine and seized three Imperial Free Cities (Metz, Toul and Verdun) while a Protestant army challenged Charles's authority in Germany. Ferdinand and Maximilian, alienated by the emperor's bullying at Augsburg the previous year, declared themselves neutral, leaving Charles dangerously isolated and without troops and money. He desperately appealed to his son that 'without losing an hour' he should raise and send as many Spanish troops as possible. 'And above all,' he added, 'take special care to raise money, because you can see and appreciate how it affects our honour and reputation, and the retention of the dominions that God has given us and that we have

acquired' (an unsubtle reference to the fact that whatever Charles lost, Philip would lose too).[2]

The emperor's appeal seems to have stunned (and perhaps shamed) the prince. 'Since these revolutions have made Your Majesty need Spanish troops for what you have to do,' he wrote, he would now raise the men and money that he had so recently claimed could not be found. He dispatched Alba to lead troops from Spain to the emperor's rescue; and, as he had done in 1541 during the Algiers campaign (chapter 1), he begged for permission to join his father in his moment of need. 'I want to be there in order to serve Your Majesty in this campaign,' he pleaded, and he ordered the galleys carrying Alba's troops to return to Spain at once so that they could transport him too, 'because it does not seem right, nor does it redound to my honour, to abandon Your Majesty at this time.'[3]

While he awaited Charles's answer, Philip said farewell to his sister Juana before she left to marry their cousin Prince John, heir to the Portuguese throne; then he travelled to Aragon to be closer to the Mediterranean coast when permission arrived for him to join his father. He soon found himself 'in greater confusion than anyone has ever been, because I have been so long without a letter from His Majesty, and without orders on what I must do'; and when one eventually arrived, while praising his spirit and support, Charles forbade his son to leave Spain. Philip's contribution would be to raise and dispatch the funds needed to sustain Alba's army while it recaptured Metz, the largest of the three Imperial cities in Lorraine seized by France.[4]

Although at one point Charles and Alba commanded 55,000 men – perhaps the largest concentration of troops ever seen in sixteenth-century Europe – Metz held out. Just before Christmas 1552 the emperor decided he must abandon the siege, and he retreated to Brussels. There he suffered a physical and psychological collapse, refusing for three months to hold audiences, appear in public or sign documents. Mary of Hungary took charge of the Monarchy's day-to-day affairs while Philip continued to administer Spain and Ferdinand ran Germany. This situation could not last, and in April 1553 (at Mary's insistence) Charles summoned Philip back to Brussels – but on one condition:

> Not only must you come here, but you must also bring with you such a large sum of money that it will serve to sustain these provinces adequately. This is the only remedy for the present situation, and the only way to ensure that . . . you will not be compelled, as soon as you arrive, to ask [the provinces] for new taxes which, since they are so exhausted, in addition to gaining you no affection, will rather cause them to resent twice as much (as subjects often do) the sacrifices you ask of them.

As soon as Philip arrived with the funds, Charles proposed to return to Spain 'so that these provinces will not be left at a time like this without the presence of one of us'.[5]

This was totally unrealistic. As Philip reminded his father, Castile had just provided the unprecedented sum of over 4.5 million ducats for the defence of Italy, Spain and the Mediterranean, as well as for Charles's rescue from his German enemies: the kingdom could provide no more now – especially since a joint French and Turkish fleet had just captured Corsica from its Genoese garrisons, jeopardizing communications between Spain and Italy. Without consulting his father, Philip at once sent 3,000 troops (and the money to sustain them) to regain Corsica, and authorized other defensive measures, further reducing the cash available for Charles.

The 'English Match'

Almost immediately, the death of Edward VI, king of England and Ireland, on 6 July 1553 changed the diplomatic situation. After a few days of uncertainty Edward's half-sister Mary Tudor, a 37-year-old spinster, ascended the throne and turned to her cousin Charles for advice. The emperor knew exactly how to exploit this windfall: he offered her the hand of his son. Charles carefully calculated the advantages to both parties. It would allow Philip to rule both Spain and the Netherlands effectively, even without becoming Holy Roman Emperor; and it would provide Mary with a 'husband who could command in wartime and carry out other functions that are unsuitable for women', perhaps allowing an invasion of Scotland that would 'make it subject to the kingdom of England'. In addition, creating a new Anglo-Netherlands state to be ruled by the heir of Philip and Mary would secure Habsburg domination of the Channel and North Sea, and thus 'keep the French in check and reduce them to reason'. Although Charles claimed unconvincingly that 'I do not seek to do more than put this idea before you so you can think about it and tell me as soon as possible how it seems to you', in effect the die had been cast: the advantages that the 'English match' would bring, Charles wrote, 'are so great and so obvious' that it was not necessary to explain them.[6]

Even with a kingdom as dowry, the prospect of marrying a cousin twelve years older left Philip unenthusiastic, but he accepted the inevitable. 'Your Majesty already knows that, as your most obedient son, my wishes are the same as yours, especially in a matter of such importance,' he wrote to Charles, and granted his father full powers 'to negotiate on my behalf' to secure 'an English match'. Hard bargaining began on the terms between Mary and her Privy Council, on the one hand, and Charles's envoys (led by Simon Renard and Count Lamoral of Egmont) on the other. The first stumbling block was whether the marriage would be finalized by proxies and take immediate effect, as

Charles wanted, or whether (as the English preferred) 'the wedding should be concluded and solemnized in the presence of both spouses'. Charles therefore demanded that his son send 'two powers of attorney, drawn up like the attached minutes, so that we can use whichever one is needed without wasting any time'.[7] Once again, the prince complied.

Charles and his advisers nevertheless concealed conditions added to the marriage treaty by Mary's ministers to safeguard England's independence: that the queen must not leave her hereditary realms except in exceptional circumstances; that any child of the couple would inherit not only England and Ireland but also the Netherlands; and that, if Mary should predecease her husband without leaving any heirs, Philip's authority in England would end. Moreover, although the treaty specified that Philip 'shall during the said marriage have and enjoy jointly together with the said most gracious queen his wife, the style, honour and kingly name of [her] realms', and provide 'aid' to his wife in governing them, it went on to insist that 'the said most noble prince shall permit and suffer the said most gracious queen his wife, to have the whole disposition of all the benefices and offices, lands, revenues and fruits of the said realms and dominions, and that they shall be bestowed upon such as shall be naturally born in the same'. Philip would not be able to 'bestow' any English assets on his subjects elsewhere. As if these restrictions were not humiliating enough for Philip, Mary's advisers also stipulated 'that the realm of England, by occasion of this matrimony, shall not directly or indirectly be entangled with the war that is betwixt the most victorious lord the emperor, father unto the said lord prince, and Henry, the French king; but he, the said lord Philip, as much as shall lie in him, on the behalf of the said realm of England, shall see the peace between the said realms of France and England observed, and shall give no cause of any breach.'[8]

Although the Imperial negotiators either omitted or minimized the significance of these developments in their letters to Philip, the prince knew all about them. On 4 January 1554, even before his father's agents signed the original treaty, the prince executed before a notary a deed stating that he would 'approve, authorize and swear to the said articles so that his marriage to the most serene queen of England may take place, but this does not bind or oblige him and his possessions, or his heirs and successors, to execute or approve any of them'.[9] Such duplicity became central to Philip's administrative style: when constrained to take actions that he disliked, he made a declaration before a notary that he did not regard concessions made under duress as binding.

Philip remained in Spain for another six months, despite warnings not only from his father but also from Mary of Hungary, who wrote 'I can assure you that if these dominions in the Netherlands are not succoured, you will lose them'.[10] The prince lingered in part because he lacked papal dispensation to marry a close relative (initially, Philip referred to his future bride as 'my beloved

and very dear aunt', since her mother was the sister of Charles V's mother), but at last permission arrived and in March 1554, with Philip's permission, Egmont stood as his proxy beside Mary Tudor while England's Lord Chancellor blessed the marriage.

Still the prince remained in Spain. Instead of travelling to Corunna, where a fleet waited to take him to England, he rode to the Portuguese frontier to meet his sister Juana, now a widow, whom he had persuaded to act as regent during his absence. As he had done with María and Maximilian, Philip provided her with detailed instructions in person on how she should act. He also accomplished another important task. He had received a confidential message from his father, asking that he choose his retirement home. Philip recommended Yuste, in the foothills of the Sierra de Gredos in Extremadura, site of a convent built by the Jeronimite Order, whose dedication to prayer had appealed in the past to members of Spain's royal family who wanted to retire from the world. After visiting Yuste in June 1554, Philip signed warrants to cover the cost of building a modest palace complex adjacent to the monastery.

Now at last Philip moved to Corunna, and while he waited for a favourable wind to take him to England, he issued his final orders for the regency government. During his absence Juana and her ministers must send him copies of all correspondence with Charles and also consult him before taking any major decisions concerning Spain, Spanish Italy or Spanish America. Although his Instructions claimed to relay 'the arrangements that His Majesty and I want', they explicitly ignored or overrode his father's earlier dispositions.[11] Having thus secured his inheritance, with a fleet large enough to deter any attempt by the French to intercept him, on 13 July 1554 Philip left Spain to marry the queen of England.

'I left Corunna on Friday,' the prince wrote, 'and that day I was so sea sick that I had to spend three days in my bed to recover.'[12] Luckily for him, the entire voyage from Spain to England took only seven days (a happy circumstance that may have distorted Philip's strategic thinking three decades later when he planned the invasion of England). He found both English and Netherlands envoys awaiting him at Southampton, where his fleet dropped anchor: the former brought him greetings and presents from his bride-to-be; the latter brought Charles's renunciation of his title to Naples in favour of his son, who thus became a king in his own right on the eve of his wedding. It was a gracious gesture. Less gracious was the message that followed. Originally, Charles had intended his son to remain in England only long enough to consummate his marriage before coming to the Netherlands to take command, so that the emperor could return to Spain. Now, instead, Charles ordered Philip to send only the troops and treasure: he had decided to take personal command of his forces, once more relegating his son to an ancillary role.

England's summer weather proved uncooperative: torrential rain soaked Philip and his entourage as they made their ceremonial entry into Winchester, where the betrothed couple had their first formal meeting. According to Juan de Barahona, a member of the royal entourage, 'His Highness was very courteous with the queen for more than an hour, speaking to her in Spanish while she spoke French, which is how they understood each other.' Then Philip spoke the only words of English he is known to have uttered: 'Good night, my lordes all'. On 25 July, Philip and Mary were married in Winchester Cathedral and, after a banquet, the 'dukes and nobles of Spain' danced with 'the most beautiful English virgins' until 9 p.m., when 'the king went to bed with the queen. And as for the rest of the night,' wrote Barahona (probably with the same lack of enthusiasm as his master), 'those who have endured the same can judge.'[13]

Her first sexual encounter left Mary exhausted and, according to Andrés Muñoz, Philip's valet, 'she did not appear in public again for four days'.[14] While she recovered, her new husband went hunting and sightseeing with a large entourage that included not only established courtiers like Alba, Feria and Ruy Gómez but also a number of others who would soon rise to high office, including the duke of Medinaceli, the counts of Chinchón and Olivares, friars Bernardo de Fresneda and Bartolomé Carranza, and secretaries Pedro de Hoyo and Gabriel de Zayas. Few relished the experience: 'Although we are in a beautiful country, we live among the worst people in the world,' wrote Muñoz. 'These English are great enemies of the Spanish nation.'[15]

What did Philip think of his new bride? 'The queen is a very good creature,' Ruy Gómez confided to a colleague the day after the wedding – 'though rather older than we had been told.' Later that week his attitude hardened: Philip 'strives to give [Mary] every possible proof' of his affection and 'omits no part of his duty', but 'to speak frankly with you, it will take a great God to drink this cup'. Luckily, Ruy Gómez concluded, Philip 'fully realizes that the marriage was not concluded for the sake of sex, but to remedy the disorders of this kingdom and to preserve the Low Countries'. Spanish opinion became harsher still after Mary's death. In 1559, when Philip married again, a minister wrote unkindly that this time with young Isabel of France 'His Majesty will have no cause to complain that he has been forced to marry an ugly old woman'.[16]

In November 1554 the queen asserted she had felt the 'quickening' of her child, and the following month she informed Charles that 'as for that which I carry in my belly, I declare it to be alive'. The couple moved to Hampton Court 'where it was thought the queen would give birth' and there assembled midwives, a cradle 'very sumptuously and gorgeously trimmed' and a wet-nurse. Meanwhile chancery clerks prepared multiple documents announcing the birth that left only the date and the sex of the infant blank.[17]

Although Mary experienced many of the signs normally associated with pregnancy – swelling of the abdomen and breasts, milk secretion – she never gave birth, and the assembled cradles and nursery staff dispersed. Charles now urged his son to join him, and in late August Philip left his wife at the palace of Greenwich and boarded a waiting ship. As it moved slowly down the Thames, Philip stood 'on the poop deck, and waved his hat to greet the queen and show his affection for her', but his distraught wife sat by a window and cried her eyes out. The two monarchs exchanged letters 'not only every day but every hour' until 3 September, when Philip crossed the Channel.[18]

The new king nevertheless continued to provide 'aid' to his wife in governing their realms. Mary's Privy Council had made this easier by issuing an order two days after the wedding that circumvented the restrictions imposed in the marriage treaty on Philip's participation. Thenceforth 'a note of all suche matters of state' debated by the council was 'made in Laten or Spanyshe' to be 'delivered to suche as it shuld please the kinges heighnes t[o] appoint to receyve it. It was also ordred that all matters of Estate passing in the King and Quenes names shuld be signed with both thier handes.'[19] This meant that Philip, although unable to speak or understand English, could take an active role in English affairs; and after he left for the Netherlands he communicated his wishes in letters written in Latin or Spanish to Mary and her principal adviser, Cardinal Reginald Pole. Three days after Philip's departure, Pole informed him that Mary took great pleasure 'from writing to Your Majesty and reading his letters' and in learning what 'the king has devised and ordered'. Two weeks later, Pole reported that 'the queen passes the forenoon in prayer, after the manner of Mary, and in the afternoon admirably personates Martha, by transacting business, so urging her councillors as to keep them all incessantly occupied . . . in following the course pointed out by' her absent husband.[20] The king also indicated his preferred 'course' through orders to a new administrative organ created just before his departure: the Select Council, composed of English ministers. This body met several times a week to discuss important domestic and foreign affairs, and at the end of each meeting it sent a Latin summary of its recommendations to Philip for comment. In most cases the king approved the recommendations, but sometimes in a marginal comment he raised objections. Thus in September 1555, the Select Council reported that most vessels in the Royal Navy were unseaworthy and should be brought to the Thames dockyards for repair, but Philip objected:

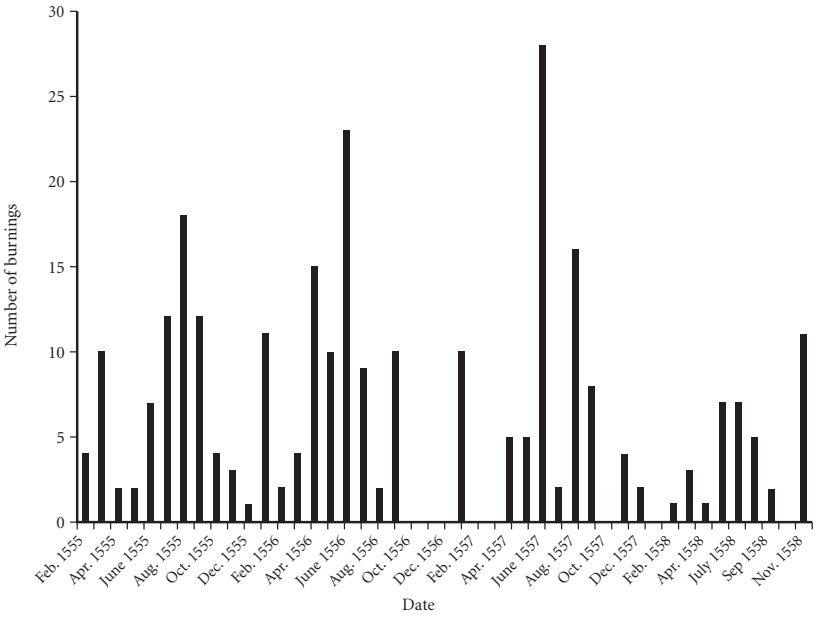
> The king understands that England's chief defence depends upon its navy being always in good order to serve for the defence of the kingdom against all invasion, and so it is right that the ships should not only be fit for sea, but instantly available. But, as the passage out of the river Thames is not an easy

one, the vessels ought to be stationed at Portsmouth, from which they can more easily be brought into service.

The councillors duly complied.[21]

Philip helped to shape English policy through appointments to offices of state, assisted by the Spanish clerics who accompanied him on his voyage, above all Carranza. Thus upon the death of the Lord Chancellor, England's most senior minister, Carranza suggested the appointment of the pious archbishop of York and Philip himself sent a letter instructing Mary 'that the said office should be given to the said archbishop', and it was done. English courtiers immediately recognized Philip's decisive role in the outcome: 'the king's majesty hath appointed the bishop of York Lord Chancellor,' one of them noted.[22]

Philip also took a keen interest in religious matters. According to Carranza, royal officials imprisoned and burned more than 450 English heretics between February 1555 and November 1558, while at least 600 more fled abroad. An eminent modern historian has suggested that Philip and Mary oversaw 'the most intense religious persecution of its kind anywhere in sixteenth-century



6. Executions for heresy by burning in England, 1555–8. At least 284 Protestants (56 of them women) were burned for their faith while Philip was king of England, starting in February 1555. Although the king's presence in England does not seem to have affected the rhythm of executions, the Privy Council oversaw the policy and sent copies of their deliberations to Philip, so he could monitor the totals – right up to his last month as king of England.

Europe'.[23] Philip intervened openly in at least one heresy case. On Easter Day, 1555, William Flower, a married ex-monk, stabbed a Dominican friar while he was saying Mass. Outraged by such sacrilege, Carranza (now 'vicar and commissary general' of the Dominican Order in England) urged Philip and Mary

> to order that exemplary justice be done immediately, saying that this was essential because any delay would cause a scandal. His Majesty promised to do this, and it was done within three days: they cut off the right hand with which he committed the crime and then burned him alive.

The king had no regrets. He later boasted that 'many heretics had been burned and many others converted' in England during his reign, including Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, burned at the stake in 1556.[24]

The transfer of power

Meanwhile, in May 1555, Gian Pietro Caraffa, an avowed enemy of Charles and his son, was elected Pope Paul IV and immediately laid plans for a coordinated attack with the assistance of France, the Turks and several sympathetic Italian states. This forced the *Rey Príncipe* (as Philip now styled himself: 'the king and prince') to take two pre-emptive steps. In the hope of winning the support of his Austrian relatives, he formally renounced all his claims to the Imperial title (chapter 2); and he took the reins of power from his father.

Charles's efforts to defend the Netherlands in the summer of 1554 had left him exhausted, and as soon as the French withdrew he retired to a small cottage in the royal park in Brussels and refused to see anyone except a few trusted household servants. A sketch of the emperor at this time shows a broken man with no teeth or hair, whose hollow eyes stare vacantly into the distance (see plate 8). On 25 October 1555 Charles walked slowly into the great hall of his Brussels palace, supported by a cane on one side and by Prince William of Orange on the other, followed by Mary of Hungary and his son Philip.

The proceedings began with a speech by a councillor explaining the emperor's reasons for wanting to abdicate and retire to Spain (mainly because 'the intense cold greatly undermined' his health). Then Charles rose unsteadily to his feet, 'put on his glasses and read what was written on a piece of paper' before making an eloquent and emotional speech reminding his audience of all the enterprises he had undertaken in their name. He then urged everyone to uphold the Catholic faith as the sole religion.[25] After he had finished, Philip fell to his knees and (in Spanish) begged his father to stay and govern a little longer so that he might 'learne of him by experience soich qualetyes as to soch a gouvernment are most necessary'; then he sat down again and, turning to the assembly, spoke

the only words of French he is known to have uttered: 'Gentlemen, although I can understand French adequately, I am not yet fluent enough to speak it to you. You will learn from the bishop of Arras [Granvelle] what I want to say.' As in England, Philip's failure to learn the languages of his subjects – and his decision to sit while addressing them, instead of standing as Burgundian protocol demanded – caused needless disappointment, but Granvelle offered some reassurance by promising, on Philip's behalf, that the new ruler would stay in northern Europe as long as required to secure their peace and prosperity and that he would return whenever needed – a wise promise which the king would not keep.[26]

Despite all the pomp and emotion, the Brussels ceremony only marked the transfer of the emperor's territories and titles in the Low Countries. Charles intended to travel back to Spain before ceding his rights over Castile and Aragon and their overseas dependencies (the Americas, Sardinia and Sicily), but lack of money to pay off his household and assemble a fleet prevented this; and so, while still in Brussels, in January 1556 Charles transferred his Spanish kingdoms, together with the title 'Catholic King', to his son – henceforth styled Philip II. At Ferdinand's request, Charles also drew up and signed a secret renunciation of his Imperial title, leaving his brother to determine the optimal moment to convene a meeting of the Electoral College to choose his successor. Meanwhile, Charles appointed his son as Imperial Vicar (deputy) in Italy.

Right up to the moment when he signed each of these solemn transfers, Charles continued to issue orders and make appointments. For example, three days before the abdication ceremony in Brussels, Charles wickedly made a host of irrevocable appointments to ecclesiastical, military and civil posts in the Netherlands, thereby depriving his son of the chance to promote his own men. Father and son seem to have held proper consultations on only one matter: who should succeed Mary of Hungary as regent of the Netherlands – but although they agreed on Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, for as long as the two monarchs remained in the Netherlands the creation of a third centre of power merely increased the confusion over who was in charge and how to allocate the sparse funds available for defence.

This situation was not sustainable. As the duke of Alba, charged with defending Spanish Italy, bluntly observed: 'We need money or peace, one or the other, or everything will collapse.'[27] In February 1556, lacking sufficient money to carry on fighting, Philip swallowed his pride and signed the truce of Vaucelles with Henry II of France. Since each side remained in possession of its conquests no one expected the ceasefire to last long, and Philip therefore resolved to remain in Brussels while his father set sail for Spain, where Philip expected him to take an active role in government; but the emperor had other plans. He headed straight for his new palace at Yuste, where he kept even his own family at bay (not even his daughter Juana received permission to visit) and utterly

refused to discuss public affairs. But much though the emperor may have wanted to ignore the world, the world refused to ignore him. In July 1556 Paul IV excommunicated both Charles and his son, placing their lands under interdict.

Given his role in bringing England back into obedience to Rome, Philip complained bitterly that the pope's actions

> lacked justification, reason and cause, as all the world has seen, because I have not only given him no cause for this, but rather His Holiness owes me favour and honour because of the way I have served and revered him and the Holy See, both in bringing England back to the Faith and in everything else I could do.[28]

Philip did not merely complain: he also ordered Juana to convene a special committee of Spanish theologians and lawyers to advise him on how best to respond to the pope's declaration of war. They proposed a radical solution, suggesting that a 'National Council should be held in Spain to reform ecclesiastical affairs'. Indeed, the committee suggested, 'it should be held for all Your Majesty's dominions, and those of your allies' – in other words, for half the Catholic world.[29]

The burden posed by simultaneously fighting the pope, France, the Turks and some Italian states seems to have shaken the king's confidence, and he sent Ruy Gómez to persuade Charles to leave Yuste and take charge of Spain once more.

> Begging Your Majesty with all humility and insistence to agree to act, helping and assisting me in this crisis not only with your advice and council, which is the greatest asset I could have, but with your own presence and authority, leaving your monastery and going to whatever place would be best for your health and for dealing with public affairs.

In addition, he instructed Ruy Gómez to 'ask His Majesty to send me his opinion concerning the war, and about where and how I can best undertake and participate in this campaign in order to achieve the greatest results'.[30]

The warrior king

While he impatiently awaited answers, Philip tried to obtain a declaration of war by England against France. The marriage treaty with Mary expressly prohibited the king from involving his new subjects in the war then raging between Charles and France, but Philip argued that the conflict unleashed by Paul IV was a new conflict and, to sell this argument to his subjects, in March

1557 he returned to England, where he spent the next three months. He then returned to Brussels to take charge of the war.

Despite his dexterity in tournaments and jousts on foot and horseback, Philip had never been exposed to mortal combat and he hoped that the 1557 campaign would change this. From the outset, he kept a tight control over strategy, military operations and logistics, and at the end of July (still in Brussels) he notified Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, who commanded his field army, that 'We have decided that you should set forth on Thursday and lay siege to St Quentin', adding 'I will travel straight to Cambrai, where I hope to be on Saturday. I will be in Cambrai on Saturday without fail' (a strange repetition, perhaps a sign of uncertainty). From there, he concluded, 'I expect to join you on Tuesday,' 3 August.[31]

Such micromanagement revealed Philip's lack of military experience. While Emmanuel Philibert's troops dug trenches around St Quentin the king and the siege train remained marooned at Cambrai, twenty-five miles to the north, unable to move until the 7,000 English troops sent by his wife arrived to escort them. 'I greatly regret that I cannot leave today, as I planned,' he wrote to Savoy on 6 August. In a holograph letter the following day he again lamented 'I am very angry that I have not been able to leave, nor can I leave soon, because the English tell me that they will not arrive here until Tuesday [10 August], although I have told them to hurry up.' When the English had still not arrived on 9 August, Philip became frantic with worry that a battle would take place without him, urging Emmanuel Philibert somewhat incoherently:

> If you cannot avoid fighting before I can be there, which will be without fail when I have said, I cannot emphasize too much – since you can see that nothing could be more important to me than that this matter turns out as I want – that you should send me news of it by sending three or four messengers here, flying at top speed, so that there will be time and opportunity for me to get there in time. I know that you would not want me to be absent in such a situation, and you know how important it is to me, so I do not want to stress it any more, although I would like to tell you about it at length.[32]

It was not to be. The next day, 10 August, St Lawrence's Day, the French tried to relieve St Quentin, and Emmanuel Philibert gave battle. Perhaps 5,000 French troops perished in combat and thousands more fell prisoner, including numerous nobles. Carranza, now in Brussels, marvelled that 'we are distributing French dukes and counts among the local castles'; adding, 'the day before yesterday three hundred French soldiers passed through, and cartloads of prisoners constantly arrive'. Fourteen years later, one of Philip's councillors still remembered with satisfaction the day when 'we knocked the French for six'.[33]

The stunning victory of his forces at St Quentin led the absent king to commission two memorials. First, he commissioned a magnificent stained-glass window in the church of St John of Gouda, as did several of those who had commanded troops in the battle (see plate 17). Second, he founded a monastery and mausoleum at the village of El Escorial north-west of Madrid, dedicated to St Lawrence, because 'he realized that such an illustrious commencement of his reign came through the Saint's favour and intercession in heaven'.[34] But that lay in the future. A few days after the battle, he entered the trenches around St Quentin at the head of his English troops, including several exiles and former rebels anxious to win the king's trust (Lord Robert Dudley, later Queen Elizabeth's Favourite, among them) and took personal charge of operations. 'His Majesty was on horseback, holding his commander's baton in his hand,' wrote an eyewitness, and that is how he appears in a famous portrait by Antonis Mor (see plate 9). Two weeks later, after battering the walls of the town 'with great fury, His Majesty was at the head of his troops', ready to lead an assault, but he resolved 'to wait, to see if the French inside the town, seeing their predicament, would surrender'. They did not, and so after another artillery bombardment the next day, according to Philip's own account: 'We entered St Quentin on all sides, killing all those whom we could find during the fury of the first assault.' 'Our Lord in His goodness has desired to grant me these victories within a few days of the beginning of my reign,' he crowed to his sister Juana, 'with all the honour and prestige [*reputación*] that follow from them.'[35]

The king also tried to micromanage the duke of Alba's campaign in Italy. Having forced the French army to retreat from Naples, on 28 August 1557, the same day that Philip's forces sacked St Quentin, Alba's artillery began to fire on the walls of Rome and his troops looked forward to 'a little plunder'. But the duke restrained them 'because the king had forbidden him to enter' the city, 'ordering him to cause only fear, not damage'.[36] This strategy worked: two weeks later, Pope Paul IV solemnly swore that he would never again make war on Philip or assist others who did, and that he would never rebuild the razed walls of the captured towns returned by the duke. The pope's ignominious surrender delivered control of all Italy to Spain, and Paul's reckless Italian allies hastened to make peace with Philip on the best terms they could.

These great victories came at a high cost, however. In May 1557 Philip had issued a decree forcibly converting the capital and interest of all outstanding short-term loans assigned for payment from his Castilian revenues into bonds bearing fixed interest of 7.14 per cent: the first default on sovereign debt in Spanish history. For a time Philip managed to raise more money from a few firms, exempting them from the terms of the decree provided they made new loans. He also exploited his father's sense of pride in the victory of St Quentin to plead once more with him 'as emphatically as I can, to take a hand in raising

money for me'; and this time, after almost a year as a recluse, Charles dictated and signed a stream of forceful letters to his former ministers urging them to help his son immediately.[37] These funds allowed Philip and his troops to capture and sack several more French towns, and in October 1557 he returned to Brussels to plead with the States-General for more money, but they refused. As Philip explained to Emmanuel Philibert, 'we will have to demobilize the army at the end of this month, because that is when the money runs out. The army has grown in size, and it costs more than we expected. I can see no way to support it.'[38] Meanwhile Henry II recalled his troops from the Italian peninsula.

Far away in Yuste, the dangers inherent in these two developments caught the emperor's experienced eye. 'If the enemy finds that you have demobilized,' he warned his son in November, 'he may decide to concentrate his forces and make an attempt this winter to recapture some of the places he has lost – or to gain some new ones.' He therefore advised Philip to maintain a large force in the vicinity of Metz, so that 'with those troops you can with greater assurance challenge the enemy to prevent him from achieving any of his goals'. This, the emperor concluded, would not only strengthen Philip's own forces but also enable him 'to assist your allies' – a veiled reference to the need to protect Calais. But Philip never saw the letter! He had decided some time before that he did not have time to deal with his father's numerous, verbose and often self-centred missives: instead he read the summaries prepared by his secretary, Francisco de Eraso. This time, Eraso totally omitted Charles's strategic insight from 'The points and items that the emperor raises with Your Majesty' and endorsed the letter itself: 'Nothing to respond to here'.[39]

Events soon revealed the wisdom of the emperor's warning. On 31 December 1557, some 30,000 French troops invaded the English enclave around Calais and captured one outpost after another. In Brussels, Philip recognized the danger and invited the English commandant to let him know 'if you need anything from us to improve your security and defence, because we would be happy to oblige'.[40] The French captured the entire Pale within three weeks, transforming the strategic situation. For Spain, 'it has created great confusion in our affairs, because just as we thought that the wars were over, it seems that they are starting again'. The 'confusion' for England was even greater, and Mary was devastated: according to a popular story, she claimed that when she died the word 'Calais' would be found 'engraved on her heart'.[41] Her only consolation at this time was a new pregnancy.

Cardinal Pole informed Philip of the pregnancy in January 1558, and the king responded that he had experienced 'more delight and pleasure than he could express on paper, because there is nothing on this earth that he had wanted more, and because it is so important for the well-being of the faith and of our realm'. So sure was Mary of her condition that on 30 March, 'foreseeing

the great danger which by Godd's ordynance remaine to all whomen in ther travel [travail] of children', she made a new testament that named Philip as regent 'during the minoryte of my said heyre and issewe'. She also kept the Royal Navy on standby at Dover and 'smartened up all lodgings between here and the coast' lest her 'gentle prince of Spain' should 'come again'. The count of Feria, Philip's personal representative to the queen, advised his master that 'all she can think of is that Your Majesty should come'.[42]

Philip agreed: the key to the future lay in whether Mary, now aged 42, was pregnant or not – and as early as February 1558 he lamented that 'the queen writes nothing to me about the pregnancy, which I take as a bad sign'. A month later he repeated that 'in the matter of the queen giving birth, it would be best to believe someone who actually saw it, and until then not to get our hopes up'; and in April, nine months after he left England, 'News that the queen has given birth is now long overdue, and so it seems we may have been mistaken'. The thought so depressed him that 'I have now become the enemy of speaking and writing to anyone, and so I don't want to say any more.'[43]

Whether or not she was pregnant, Mary's expectation that her husband would visit her again was entirely realistic – couriers regularly travelled between Brussels and London in four days, and Philip himself had once crossed the Channel in two and a half hours – but it never happened. First, the king fell ill. In February 1558 he was laid low by a fever 'which has left me very weak and weary' and 'right now I cannot eat anything'; worse, 'everything has gone to my chest and so I can't sleep at night'. Feria must tell the queen all this to explain why he could not visit her. The next week brought new complaints. 'My chest still troubles me, and I'm in such a state that until now I have not dared' to leave the palace. And then, when 'I went riding for a while' on horseback 'I had to rest two or three times on the way out and the same on the way back'.[44]

In a letter dated 1 May 1558, Feria advised his master that even Mary had now accepted that she was no longer pregnant, and that 'she sleeps very badly, and is weak from melancholy and illnesses'. This made it imperative for Philip to 'speak and write' to his wife about recognizing her half-sister Elizabeth as her heir. Philip complied. 'I am writing to the queen,' he assured Feria, 'praising the way Elizabeth is behaving', adding that the queen 'must realize that if she should die, she will leave behind a kingdom that is hostile to me'.[45] To avoid this, he decided to pay a flying visit to see both his wife and his sister-in-law – but at the last minute he had to abandon his plan because French forces launched a surprise attack. Philip had just forfeited his last chance not only to see his wife but also to place her successor in his debt: persuading Mary to recognize Elizabeth's rights would have greatly increased his influence in England.

Instead, Philip concentrated on organizing opposition to the French troops who invaded Flanders and captured several ports until, on 13 July 1558, Egmont

transformed the situation by ambushing the invaders outside Gravelines, killing or capturing most of them. Two weeks later, Philip ('who seemed very happy') visited his army, congratulated Egmont, and accompanied his troops over the next two months as they invaded France again. Although he himself did not participate in any more military operations, a task he left to the duke of Savoy, he did hold regular meetings to decide strategy. Sometimes Philip summoned Emmanuel Philibert to report in person 'because it is easier to understand these matters in a conversation than in a letter'; at other times he went to the duke's headquarters and listened as his generals and civilian advisers debated the options. In September 1558, as the campaign season drew to a close, at a special meeting of his principal ministers – Dutch, Italian and Spanish – a consensus emerged in favour of Granvelle's proposal that Philip should conclude a cease-fire that left his troops in control of much of northern France and use that advantage to negotiate a lasting settlement.[46]

At first this goal seemed unattainable because the French wanted Naples and Milan; the English insisted on the return of Calais; the duke of Savoy expected all his lands back; and Philip demanded Burgundy and Picardy. The French argued that the most effective way to settle all their disputes with Philip was for his son, Don Carlos, to marry Henry II's eldest daughter Isabel, but they insisted on settling outstanding issues with England first. Philip shrewdly warned the English negotiators that 'The nature and custom of the French (as you doubtless know) is to be harsher and less tractable at the beginning, but the passage of time renders them more pliant and tractable', and he generously proposed that they 'asked for Calais as the dowry' for his French bride, which he promised to give back to England; but the English angrily (and, it soon emerged, foolishly) rejected this because it called into question their sovereignty over the area. The impasse only ended when news arrived of Mary Tudor's death on 17 November 1558.[47]

Ex-king of England

Rumours concerning the queen's ill health had circulated for some time, leading Philip to discuss with his advisers the best way to keep England Catholic should Mary die. In October 1558, on learning that the queen's 'life was at risk', he ordered Feria 'to go and see the Lady Elizabeth, and treat her as [my] sister and ensure that she accedes to the crown without disturbance'. It was too late: Mary's councillors had already persuaded her to recognize Elizabeth as her successor. Mary died a week later, and her husband's title 'king of England, Ireland and France' died with her.[48]

Philip had achieved much in England, especially in the matter of religion. In October 1554, three months after Philip married Mary, a Spanish visitor

lamented that 'The friars who have come here [from Spain] are always confined to their convents and only go to say Mass. They do not dare to go into the streets, unless accompanied by many Spaniards, because they would be stoned.' What a contrast with the situation five years later, when even Protestants expressed grudging amazement at the success of Philip's efforts:

> Our universities are so depressed and ruined, that at Oxford there are scarcely two individuals who think with us, and even they are so dejected and broken in spirit, that they can do nothing. [Some] despicable friar[s] . . . have reduced the vineyard of the Lord into a wilderness. You would scarcely believe that so much desolation could have been effected in so short a time.[49]

Soon after her accession, Elizabeth had to replace the heads of almost every Oxford college, almost all the bishops and two-thirds of the deans and officials who had served her sister because they all remained loyal to the pope. As Eamon Duffy correctly observed, 'It was the death of the queen, not any sense of failure, loss of direction or waning of determination', that ended the Catholic England recreated by Philip and Mary. Even without 'issewe' from his marriage to Mary Tudor, a durable Catholic establishment would probably have emerged in England had the queen lived to be 56, like her father, Henry VIII – let alone 70, like her similarly childless sister Elizabeth. Instead Mary died at age 42.

Mary Tudor was not the only relative whom Philip mourned. On 1 November 1558 he received word of his father's death at Yuste six weeks earlier. The news left him distraught and he at once retired to the monastery of Groenendaal near Brussels. When Emmanuel Philibert visited him there to transact some pressing business twelve days later, 'I found him very sad'; and when he learned that Mary of Hungary had also died, Philip lamented to his sister Juana:

> It seems that everything is failing me at the same time. Let us bless God for what He does, because there is nothing I can say, except to accept His will and beg that He will be satisfied with what has happened so far . . . These deaths cannot but create problems for me, and give me a lot to think about in how to govern these provinces, and how best to deal with England, depending on whether the queen should live or die.

He concluded on a note of self-pity: 'I don't even want to mention how I myself feel, because that is what matters least.'[50]

His worst fears were realized on 7 December, when he heard that not only Mary Tudor but also Cardinal Pole had died. Four days later, according to his confessor, 'His Majesty is so depressed by the death of his father and the others,

which so afflict him that he does not want to see anyone for a while.' Three weeks later, still in solitude at Groenendaal, Philip painted a sombre picture of his situation.

> I have no money to pay for any of the many things that must be done, so that I cannot maintain myself any more with the resources of the Netherlands. Nor can I go to Spain without making peace first, because it would not look good and would dishearten these provinces – although my presence here does nothing to win them over, but rather alienates them.

Indeed, he mused disconsolately, 'I think they would be happy with any sovereign except me.'[51]

Ever since he started to govern, fifteen years before, Philip had craved independence and respect – and resented the fact that he did not seem to get them. As he scribbled angrily on the dorse of one of Mary of Hungary's hectoring letters to 'Your Highness' in spring 1558:

> You will see from this letter that the queen certainly knows how to make her case, and that she must have advisers who tell her what would be best for her, without showing me the respect that they should have for me, because they do not want to recognize my status. I want no one to rank above me in these realms of mine, except for His Majesty [Charles V].[52]

Now that both Mary and 'His Majesty' were dead, Philip's wish had come true. As he entered his fourth decade, after the long apprenticeship, he could now issue orders 'by virtue of our own will, certain knowledge, and absolute royal authority, which in this matter we wish to use and do use as king and sovereign lord, not recognizing any temporal superior on this earth'.[53] Besides respect and authority, he also possessed absolute freedom in his personal life: he could get up and go to bed whenever he wanted, take as long as he liked to shave and get dressed, come and go as he pleased, speak or be silent whenever and wherever he chose, and surround himself with Fools and jesters as much as he desired. How would he make use of all these new freedoms?

PART II

THE KING AND HIS WORLD

CHAPTER FOUR

The king at work[1]

'A blizzard of problems'

'I find this prince very involved in his affairs of state: he does not waste an hour, spending the whole day dealing with his papers,' a French ambassador wrote of Philip II in 1559. Fifteen years later, a Venetian diplomat remained impressed by the king's dedication: 'The king works with such diligence, without any recreation, that there is no minister in the world, however diligent he may be, who is as involved in his work as His Majesty.' And in a funeral sermon for Philip in 1598, a royal preacher declared, 'You never saw in this world a man who worked so hard: he never spent an idle hour, but was always dealing with papers, memoranda and affairs. Even in the woods and gardens he was loaded down with papers, ceaselessly writing and transacting business.'[2]

The king himself agreed, and often called to his ministers' attention how hard he worked. In 1558, in a letter written when 'it's already after midnight', Philip complained that 'they are killing me with work by day, which means I am worn out by night', so that 'if I have forgotten something, you should blame the sleep I lost by having to get up early'. Seven years later, he again complained that 'the burdens I have to carry are so heavy that I no longer know what I am doing or saying'. He nevertheless kept working on his papers until '1 a.m., and everyone is falling asleep around me'. One day in 1577, when the king looked up from his desk, he found 'it's 10 p.m., I feel shattered and I'm dying of hunger'. A year later he informed his secretary that 'so many papers have just arrived, after I have spent the whole day working without stopping, that I will not be able to finish with them tonight. I really don't know what they [the authors of the papers] think of me, other than I must be made of iron or stone; but really, although I keep quiet about it, I'm so tired that they will soon find out that I'm human like everyone else.'[3]

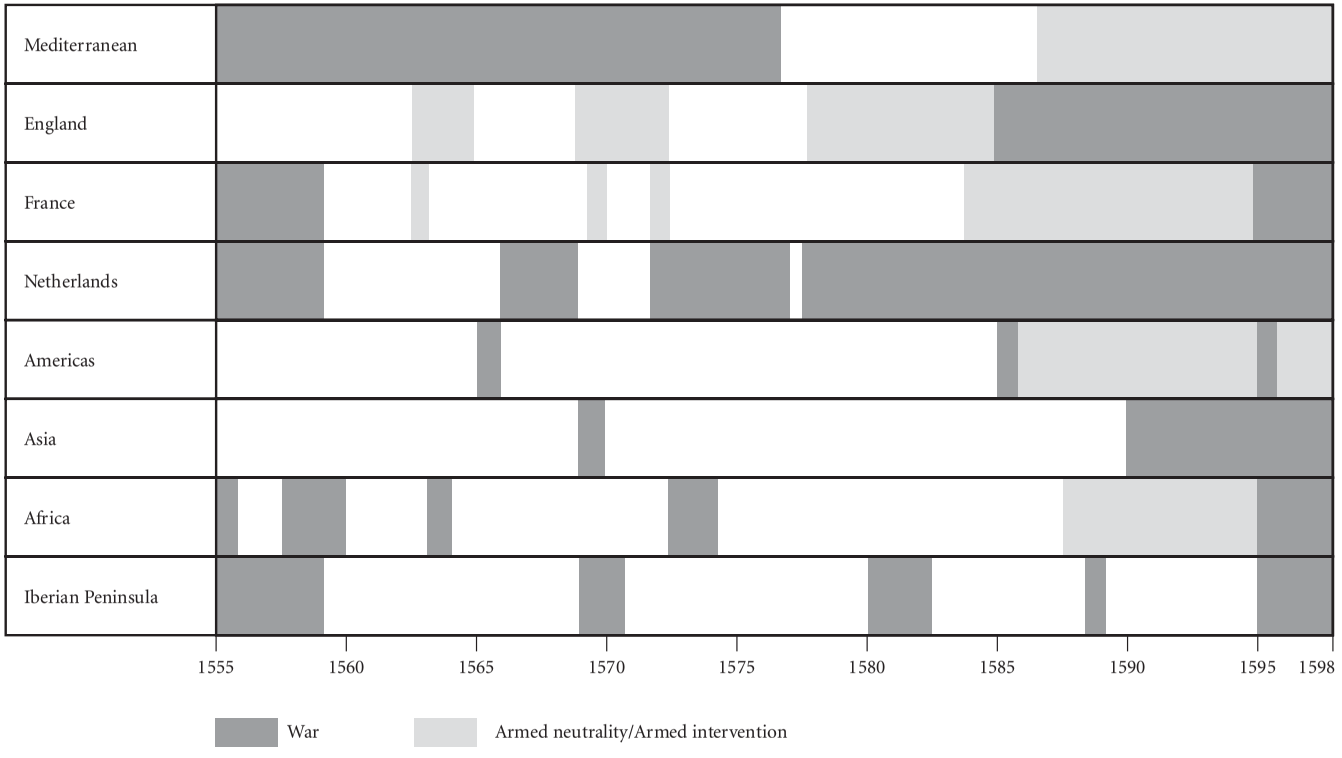
'So many papers': where did they all come from? Since his empire included more than fifty million vassals and extended from the Philippines, via Mexico and Peru, to Spain, the Low Countries and half of Italy, governing them – and especially defending them – created an immense paper trail. From his accession until 1559, and from 1589 until just before his death, he fought the French; until 1576 he remained at war with the Ottoman empire; after 1572, except for six months in 1577, his forces struggled to suppress his rebellious Dutch subjects and their allies (most notably England after 1585). He often fought wars on more than one front simultaneously, and at sea as well as on land; and to fund these various conflicts, in the words of a recent article, he 'managed a budget on a scale that has not been seen since the height of the Roman Empire'.[4]

Fighting wars places all rulers under intense stress. Not only do they require resources that may prove hard to find, they also divert attention from other problems – just as those other problems sometimes divert attention from winning the war. Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense of the United States during the 1960s, eloquently voiced this timeless dilemma in his memoirs:

> One reason the Kennedy and Johnson administrations failed to take an orderly, rational approach to the basic questions underlying Vietnam was the staggering variety and complexity of other issues we faced. Simply put, we faced a blizzard of problems: there were only twenty-four hours in the day and we often did not have time to think straight. This predicament is not unique to the administration in which I served or to the United States. It has existed in all times and in most countries . . . and it ought to be recognized and planned for when organizing a government.[5]

Philip and his ministers faced exactly the same 'predicament' as McNamara and others who led a global empire at war: what they needed was 'time to think straight' about what would be the best policy – and they usually failed to find it. One day, Philip complained that although 'I would like to deal with' some matters of critical importance, 'there are so many other things that prevent me. What I most regret is that I am slowed down by having so many things to do', and 'if I tried to do all of them, I would get nothing done'.[6]

Philip tried to deal with the 'blizzard of problems' that he faced in writing. According to an English diplomat in 1575, 'This king is most wise, a diligent dealer in his owne affaires with great secretsy . . . He writeth and dispatcheth by billets more (they will saie) than all his secretaris.' A decade later, a Venetian ambassador provided a more detailed picture of the workload of this 'diligent dealer':



7. Philip II's Wars. Philip's Monarchy enjoyed peace for only six months: between February and September 1577, when hostilities ceased in both the Netherlands and the Mediterranean. Thereafter, although the king never went to war with the Turks again, conflict returned to the Netherlands (lasting until 1609) and began with England (open hostilities lasted from 1585 to 1603). After the assassination of Henry III in 1589 Philip became increasingly involved in the French Religious Wars until the peace of Vervins in 1598. Overseas, the Portuguese outposts in Africa and South Asia engaged in various hostilities: first against their local enemies and then against the Dutch who after 1594 began to send heavily-armed fleets into the Indian Ocean.

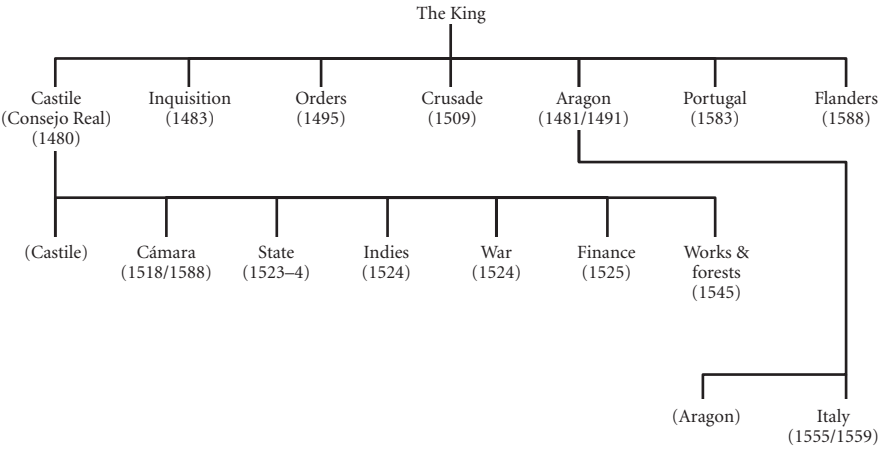
> He writes every day with his own hand more than a quinternion of paper, between minutes, opinions and orders, which are transmitted to his councillors, judges, secretaries and ministers in this way; and it is hardly to be believed how much time he spends in signing letters, licences, patents and other affairs of grace and justice, which on certain days amount to two thousand.

In 1592, according to an English spy, writing still formed Philip's 'common occupation, and thereby he dispatcheth more than any three secretaries; and in this manner with his pen and purse governeth the world'.[7]

Even these observers underestimated the quantity of business transacted by Philip in writing, because he and his ministers deliberately destroyed many important documents. Thus in 1579 the president of the council of Castile informed the king that he still had 'some papers' on his desk concerning a delicate matter 'besides those I have already burned; and since the matter is now closed, if Your Majesty agrees I can burn the rest'. The king approved. He and his ministers also refused to entrust some matters to paper: 'You already know what else I might say about this, and about other things that are happening in the world, which should not be written down' (1552); 'I will tell Your Majesty about this in person, whenever it pleases you to hear me, because it is not something to entrust to paper' (1572); 'Let us talk about this in due course, because it is something better spoken than written about' (1577); 'This matter is not something that should be written down' (1579); '[This] should not be committed to paper, so I will talk to you about it' (1588).[8]

The conciliar system

Throughout his reign, most matters that required a decision came to the king's desk from one of thirteen permanent councils and a permanent committee (the Junta de Obras y Bosques, or 'Ministry of Works'). Philip inherited five of these councils from his great-grandparents, Ferdinand and Isabella, and five more and the junta from his father; the other three he instituted himself. After 1561, when Madrid became the permanent location of the central government, each body met at fixed times on fixed days in the Alcázar, the royal palace, and transacted business in a constant rhythm, even when the monarch himself was absent. Each council (consisting of a president, a secretary and a number of councillors) performed two principal functions: maintaining the rights and powers of the crown in their area of competence; and discussing letters and memoranda concerning that same area before recommending what action the king should take. Government officials throughout the Monarchy channelled their reports to the king through the appropriate central institution. Thus the viceroys of each of Spain's Italian dominions received orders to send all letters



8. The councils of Philip II (with their dates of creation). By the time of his death in 1598, fourteen central councils or permanent committees (each the equivalent of a modern government department) advised Philip. He inherited eleven institutions and created only three: the council of Italy in the 1550s and the councils of Portugal and Flanders in the 1580s.

The repetition of a council's name in parenthesis means that it continued to meet after the king transferred some of its functions to a new body. Two dates of creation separated by a slash indicates that the king drastically changed the body's responsibilities at a later date, so that it could be said to have two 'birthdays'.

relating to 'administration, justice, domain and finance, other routine business, and patronage' to the council of Italy; matters of war or peace, and relations with other rulers, to the council of State; and any business involving the crown of Aragon and the Inquisition to the appropriate central body.[9]

At the beginning of his reign, Philip presided in person over meetings of the council of State, but a few months after his return to Spain in 1559 he ceased to attend, on the grounds that his absence would encourage free debate: henceforth his presence at discussions signalled that a major policy decision was imminent. Except for the council of Castile, which by tradition attended on him as a body once a week, the secretary of every council brought a pile of *consultas* (the formal reports communicating the council's recommendations on each incoming letter or other document on which the king sought its advice) to the anteroom of the king's study, whence his valets brought them in sequence to his desk. There, Philip read them and then wrote his decision in the broad left margin empty on all consultas for precisely this purpose. Some of his responses were brief ('Agreed', 'Good', 'Do so') but others overflowed

between the lines and sometimes overran the corresponding paragraph, necessitating a dividing line to show where one comment ended and the next began. Once Philip had written out his decisions, long or short, the document went back to the secretary of the appropriate council, who prepared a suitable response and sent it to the king for signature (see plates 10 and 11).

The king planned his days meticulously. 'Come tomorrow evening' or 'tomorrow after I eat lunch', he informed the ministers he could not avoid seeing. 'Tell me how things stand tomorrow at lunch time, and I will tell you when I can listen to you.' Whenever possible, Philip planned his tasks a week in advance. One Monday in 1578, when Inquisitor-General Gaspar de Quiroga requested a meeting the king replied: 'I would be very pleased to see you, but I have already planned out the whole week, at least until Saturday'; but when Saturday came, he told Quiroga that he would have to wait another day: 'Tomorrow, Sunday, you can come here after 3 p.m., because I could not manage to see you today.'[10] The unexpected arrival of urgent papers infuriated him. 'These "special deliveries" destroy me,' he once complained, because 'they prevent me from doing the things that I had planned to take care of today.' On another occasion, while he was reading a consulta sent by one of his ministers 'your messenger' brought another document – but the king refused to accept it, writing on it: 'I cannot see this until tomorrow because I have already made plans to see many other things tonight. It would mess up everything for me.'[11]

Philip always carefully read the documents presented by his ministers before signing them. Although he later applied a rubber stamp [*estampilla*] to routine orders, he still seems to have glanced at them first and sometimes struck through a neatly written text because he had noted an administrative irregularity ('It seems to me that there are problems with the warrants I have not signed, because those for the three kingdoms of the crown of Aragon, and especially the one for Aragon itself, will not be obeyed and are against the *fueros* [local customs]'); because he did not like the tone ('The letters for the king of Portugal and the republic of Genoa are impertinent, because they read almost like orders'); because it was unclear ('Do it again, omitting the words I have deleted which nobody will understand'); or because he had spotted an error ('It seems to me that it was not [1 August] but 31 July. See if this is correct in the cyphered text, because my letters should contain no mistakes.' He also sometimes insisted on seeing with his own eyes papers which his ministers would have preferred to conceal from him ('I want to see these messages for myself'). When more delicate matters were at stake, the king might labour to improve the text or add a holograph postscript; and he wrote letters entirely in his own hand to the pope, to his close relatives, and to his senior ministers on sensitive issues.[12]

Only rarely would the king admit that he lacked the competence to take a decision. In 1562, when asked under oath about the orthodoxy of some

theological views, he declined to answer because 'His Majesty is not a theologian'; and a quarter of a century later, when his secretary asked what steps should be taken to deal with an apocalyptic preacher, the king snapped back, 'Since I am not a lawyer, I have no idea what to say.'[13] The only subject on which Philip freely (and frequently) admitted his ignorance was finance. Sometimes he became angry when his advisers sent him papers that he could not comprehend: 'The author must understand this [paper] better than I do, because I cannot understand it at all'; 'You know how little I know about which is a better or worse memorial, and now that this one has arrived I do not wish to burst my brains on something I do not understand and have never managed to understand in my whole life'; 'I have never been able to get this business of loans and interests into my head'; 'I have already told you on other occasions how little I understand these matters – and this time I certainly understood very little, almost nothing, of this paper, although I have read it more than twice.'[14] He also became angry when his advisers did not agree. 'For someone who cannot make head or tail of this matter, it is bad to have so many contradictions,' he protested one day in 1573; worse, 'I cannot discuss the various proposals with the council of Finance because it's a matter that I do not understand, and so I would not be able to do anything except what they tell me I should do.'[15]

Despite his frustration, Philip knew that financial affairs 'are so many and so important that truly I feel dismayed at not knowing what to do with them, and it is so important to make the right decision'. He usually did his best to understand the memorials submitted by Juan Fernández de Espinosa, a banker who served as his treasurer general – 'I read this paper by Juan Fernández, but not the rest because I did not understand any of them' – but sometimes even Fernández's proposals left him perplexed. 'To be frank,' he complained of one of them,

> I could not understand a word of this. I do not know what I should do: should I send it to someone else for comment, and if so, to whom? Time is slipping away. Or would it be best for me to see the author (although I fear I shall not understand him)? Perhaps if I had the papers in front of me it might not be too bad.

The king grudgingly agreed to see Fernández the following day – but on condition 'that he brings the papers with him, so that he has them in his hand while we talk.'[16]

Keeping the initiative

Philip's insistence on transacting so much business in writing gave great power to the small number of ministers who handled state papers. The council

secretaries, for example, selected the letters and papers he could read in full, those that he would see merely in summary, and occasionally those that he would not see at all. In 1574, when the war in the Netherlands had reached a critical stage, Mateo Vázquez, the king's chaplain and personal secretary, decided to forward a dossier on an unrelated subject with a cover note that read: 'Although I can see that concern for the Netherlands preoccupies Your Majesty, and that the problems there afford little time to attend to other business, I thought I should remind you about the attached letter from Don Diego de Mendoza'. In 1586, one of the king's distant relatives thanked the same Vázquez for having ensured that Philip saw his petition, 'because although His Majesty does everything he can for me, his many concerns sometimes distract him.'[17] Conversely, that same year, Vázquez secretly returned to a colleague a document 'that I came across in the incoming mail that I believe His Majesty should not see'. In 1577 Secretary of State Antonio Pérez informed the Spanish ambassador in Paris, a close friend, that his letters 'gave great satisfaction to our master. He saw all of them – I mean, the ones he should see.' A decade later Pérez's successor, Don Juan de Idiáquez, likewise intercepted and suppressed a letter addressed to the king by the duke of Medina Sidonia, declining his appointment to command the Spanish Armada and expressing serious doubts about the wisdom of the enterprise itself. 'We did not dare to show his Majesty what you have just written,' Idiáquez and his colleague Don Cristóbal de Moura announced. In 1595, finally, when the same Moura received a consulta from the president of the council of Finance, he replied drily, 'I did not wish to tell His Majesty anything about this' because Moura did not think Philip would like it.[18]

Unless it arrived with a recommendation from one of his councils, Philip rarely took a decision on any paper that reached his desk without first seeking advice from a trusted minister. For example, when in 1578 he received a memorandum about economic matters, the king asked his secretary: 'See if someone else should take a look at this, and (given the subject) who – because I don't understand it.' Twenty years later, Nuncio Camillo Caetani (an acute observer) confirmed that Philip has 'always sought the opinion of his councillors' – although, Caetani continued, 'to maintain secrecy, he keeps a lot to himself and often shares knowledge of his affairs with only a few people, not all equal to handling so many and different matters'.[19]

This administrative procedure fostered bitter personal rivalries among the 'few people' in whom the king placed his trust. His father's Instructions of 1543 had warned about 'the animosities, alliances and almost cabals that have formed or are being formed among my ministers' and, as the emperor had predicted, they increased over time. The rivalry between the two most important officers of the royal household, Ruy Gómez de Silva (*Sumiller de Corps*) and the duke of Alba (*Mayordomo Mayor*) eventually forced almost all ministers to

align themselves with one or the other. In addition, those who enjoyed the king's favour exerted themselves to secure government jobs for their relatives, including distant relatives (thus Ruy Gómez furthered the career of Juan de Escobedo, who would become the personal secretary of Philip's brother, Don John of Austria, because Escobedo was his wife's cousin). Such empire-building enabled dynasties like the Toledos (of which the duke of Alba was the senior member) and the Mendozas (to which Ruy Gómez's wife belonged) to obtain many official posts, producing a sustained rivalry at all levels of the royal administration given that 'the entire House of Mendoza hates the House of Toledo'.[20] Ministers also forged alliances with colleagues who might help them achieve their goals. Thus Antonio Pérez secured for Gaspar de Quiroga first the see of Toledo and then a cardinal's hat; Quiroga in turn convinced the king to appoint his ally Antonio Mauriño de Pazos as president of the council of Castile; and Pazos reciprocated by singing Pérez's praises to the king. 'Patriotism' could also reinforce factions. When Diego de Simancas, a member of the council of Castile, tried to work out why the king had named Pazos, not him, president of the council, he recalled that 'some months earlier Quiroga had boasted in his home that the next president would either be him or whoever he wanted'. But why, Simancas persisted, had Quiroga wanted Pazos? He saw the explanation in geography: 'the Quirogas come from Galicia, and Pazos too was from Galicia'. The archbishop had therefore looked after his compatriot: 'He got him named bishop of Ávila, telling the king that he deserved to be archbishop of Toledo more than he himself, and that the king could and should employ him in matters of great importance.' By securing the appointment of an otherwise underqualified compatriot, Simancas concluded, Quiroga 'had placed him under an obligation, and might expect that he would keep him under his thumb'.[21]

Philip introduced an important innovation to counter the risk that his ministers might deceive him. Early in his reign, he began to instruct senior ministers that 'You may also put on the envelope "to be placed in the king's hands", because I have ordered that such letters should be brought to me sealed so that, when I have seen the contents, I can arrange what is most convenient for my service'. Inevitably a few ministers abused the system, but they did not do so for long. Thus in 1586 the king lost his temper with a viceroy who insisted on referring too much to him directly: 'Sending letters "to be placed in the king's hands" has become a terrible burden, because I often lack the time even to open them. In fact it only serves to slow business down, because I have had these two letters for days but have not been able to open them until now.'[22] But woe betide the secretary who inadvertently opened a letter 'to be placed in the king's hands'! In 1594 Philip's private secretary trembled as he reported that 'while opening the packages that the courier just brought, I opened by mistake this one from the president [of the council of Castile] which was to be "placed

in Your Majesty's hands", and I did not realize until I had removed the envelope; but I swear to Your Majesty that I never saw a word of what it contains'. The king was furious: 'Make sure you look more carefully in future, so that there are no more mistakes like this.'[23]

Yet the king was not above opening letters addressed to others, including those of foreign diplomats in Madrid, or even decoding documents that 'are not for me' before resealing the originals and sending them to their destination. 'You and I must be like confessors,' Philip joked with Mateo Vázquez when he ordered him to transcribe documents 'without a living soul seeing or knowing'. From time to time he also ordered Vázquez to maintain a secret correspondence with one minister concerning the conduct of another.[24] Such devious practices led Ambassador Leonardo Donà of Venice to warn his masters that 'by nature, [the king] is both very prudent and very suspicious', and in his 'Relation' to the Senate at the end of his embassy in 1573 he repeated that Philip never entirely trusted anyone: 'The king suffers from the same malady as his father: that is, suspicion'.[25]

In 1565 Secretary of State Gonzalo Pérez, who boasted forty years of administrative experience, complained bitterly to a colleague about a major defect in the administrative style of their master. 'His Majesty makes mistakes, and will continue to make mistakes, in many matters because he handles them with different people, sometimes with one, at other times with another, concealing something from one minister but revealing other things. It is therefore small wonder that different and even contradictory orders are issued.' Two years later, his successor Gabriel de Zayas used even stronger terms. 'The king chooses to allow important matters to flow through many channels,' he complained to the duke of Alba, 'which creates chaos.'[26] The king took note, and to ensure that 'important matters' did not travel through 'many channels' he appointed the same ministers to serve on several councils. A position on both State and War, or on Indies and Finance, was common; a seat on State, War and Finance was not unknown – so that at least some members knew what was happening in other advisory bodies and could, at least in theory, help to coordinate affairs. Francisco de Eraso, who had served Philip and his father for thirty years, had by 1559 become the secretary of no fewer than six councils and a member of two more. As the French ambassador put it, just before the king and his entourage left the Netherlands, 'the management of almost everything is now entrusted to the hands' of Eraso 'because his master esteems him and defers to him so much'.[27] This 'esteem' lasted until 1565, when accusations of corruption led the king to authorize a formal investigation (*visita*) into Eraso's official conduct. A year later, Philip imposed a fine of 12,000 ducats, suspended him from most of his offices for twelve months and deprived him of all his treasury posts.

Almost immediately, Philip began to defer to Diego de Espinosa, a priest born to a poor gentry family. After studying civil and canon law at Salamanca, the king named him a judge in the Audiencia of Seville, where he impressed the Jesuit Francisco de Borja, who recommended him to the king as 'a person of much learning, virtue and prudence' worthy of high office. Philip duly appointed Espinosa a member of the council of State, president of the council of Castile and Inquisitor-General. By 1565 Espinosa had become 'the man in all Spain in whom the king places most confidence and with whom he discusses most business, concerning both Spain and foreign affairs' and 'everything – sacred and secular, worldly and spiritual – passes through his hands'. In short, as an astonished ambassador put it, Philip had made Espinosa 'another king in this court'.[28]

Although concentrating power in a single pair of hands created an enviable consistency in the policies of Philip's government, it also fostered a false appearance of unanimity among decision-makers – both actively (by discouraging the expression of dissenting views) and passively (by guiding discussions in ways that minimized disagreement). A later generation would call this 'groupthink'. The stifling of debate during the Espinosa years helps to explain the inflexible policies that provoked both the Dutch and the Moriscos of Granada to rebel (chapters 8 and 11); and it may also explain why, after Espinosa's sudden death in September 1572, the king did not appoint a successor to 'superintend matters of war, state and finance, the handling of consultas and all the rest of the burden [of business] entrusted to the Cardinal'.[29] 'I believed that it was right to entrust many matters which concerned my royal office to the Cardinal,' Philip informed Espinosa's successor as president of the council of Castile. 'And perhaps good reasons existed for it then. But experience has shown that it was not a good thing; and although it meant more leisure and less work for me, I do not think it should be allowed to continue.' Philip had come to appreciate the wisdom of his father's advice, tendered almost thirty years before: 'do not become tied or obliged to any [single minister], because while it will save you time it is not in your interest.'[30]

The junta system

Instead of allowing one of his ministers to serve as 'another king at court' (as his successors would do, openly appointing a Favourite), after Espinosa's death Philip relied on a network of informal committees (*juntas*) coordinated by a 'chief of staff': Mateo Vázquez, a priest of obscure origins (an orphan, possibly illegitimate) who had served as Espinosa's secretary. After the cardinal's death, Vázquez proposed to Philip a simple method of reducing his burdens. 'It seems,' he wrote cautiously, 'that Your Majesty lacks a private secretary, which means that you cannot avoid reading and writing many things, and I fear this burden

of work may damage your health.'[31] Vázquez took the oath as royal secretary on 1 April 1573 and Philip entrusted to him two principal duties: he handled all correspondence 'to be placed in the king's hands'; and he coordinated the informal juntas created by Espinosa, and served as their secretary. Together, Vázquez and the king determined who should become a member of each junta (and when they should be dropped), the times of the meetings and the agenda. Vázquez also took the minutes, relayed the king's instructions to each junta and presented their recommendations to the king. Vázquez later took over two more tasks: drafting the king's decisions on incoming consultas ('His Majesty orders that . . .'); and serving as intermediary between Philip and the council secretaries ('His Majesty has given me some letters from prelates about the arms trade and ordered me to send them to the council of Castile, even though they appear appropriate to the council of War' or 'His Majesty ordered me to send to the president of the council of the Indies two letters, even though they come from Inquisition tribunals' in America). He would do this until his death in 1591, making him for a time 'probably the second most powerful man in the Spanish empire'.[32]

Vázquez paid a high price for his prominence. He lived constantly at the king's beck and call, often obliged to drop whatever he was doing and attend to something else immediately. 'After writing to you, something has come up about which I must speak to you today. So be ready to come here whenever I call you – which will be as soon as I can' (1574); 'Transcribe this immediately, while I write and attend to other things and then eat my lunch' (1577); 'Look at this while I eat and then take my siesta, and send me your advice so that I can read it and decide what to do when I awake' (1579).[33]

Yet even Vázquez's devotion could not halt the avalanche of business that flowed over the king's desk. At the beginning of the reign, the council of the Indies met for three hours every morning, but after 1571 it also met three afternoons a week; and while the council of Finance used to meet only twice a week, by 1580 it transacted business every morning for three or four hours and sometimes continued into the afternoons. This inevitably increased the number of consultas that arrived on the king's desk. The council of War, for example, produced scarcely two bundles of documents a year in the 1560s but over thirty a year in the 1590s – a fifteen-fold increase – while the council's secretaries prepared for the king's scrutiny and signature nearly 2,000 letters annually on military and naval business. The activity of other parts of the central government increased at a similar pace. Between March 1572 and March 1573, during the 161 days that Philip spent away from his capital, couriers from Madrid brought him more than 500 packets full of letters and consultas from the ministers in the capital. Council secretaries sent the lion's share of the couriers

(70 per cent); the marquis of Ladrada, majordomo of the queen and her children, single-handedly sent almost 5 per cent; while four other ministers sent 10 per cent more.[34] The same couriers also brought masses of direct petitions from individuals for the king to grant them something: a pension or a pardon; a civil or ecclesiastical post; payment of salary arrears or a licence to print a book; a knighthood in one of the Military Orders or a patent of nobility. In March 1571, for example, over 1,250 individual memorials arrived for the king's consideration – an average of over 40 a day.

Every memorial, like every consulta, required the king to make a decision. Some were easy – 'having read everything, I have decided that . . .' or 'They are right about this, so let it be done when and how they suggest' – but others were not. Thus in 1575, Philip spent a miserable day in his role as Grand Master of the Military Order of Santiago, 'in which I am bursting my brains because there are 117 qualified supplicants for 12 vacant positions'. So he put off the decision for three days, but then found the task even more overwhelming because 'with many asking and few receiving, most will remain discontented; and for this and other reasons I say that the office of king is awful'. Filling positions in the Church, in his household and in his government also absorbed countless hours: for every vacancy, there were many qualified applicants, most of them with powerful patrons in his entourage – and in each case the king had to choose among them, sometimes finding it necessary 'to shut myself away yesterday and the day before, because otherwise I would not be able to do anything'.[35]

Nevertheless, thanks to their dedication and flexibility, the king and the central administration coped reasonably efficiently with the mass of routine business generated by the empire on which the sun never set. The *Diary* kept by Antonio Gracián y Dantisco, who handled the king's correspondence between 1571 and 1576, reveals the remarkable speed with which Philip took many decisions: 'A package from Escobedo [secretary of the treasury] arrived in the morning and the courier left with the replies at 6 p.m.'; 'Another courier arrived at 8:30 p.m. with letters from the president [of the council of Castile] and he left with the replies within half an hour'; 'A courier arrived at 10 p.m. with a small package from the princess [Juana] which had to be given to the king at once; it was, and he left with the reply at 11 p.m.' One day Philip returned a pile of papers to Gracián's successor, Mateo Vázquez, with the smug note 'Here is everything that arrived today' – but, he added wistfully, 'Would that it was always thus'.[36] In 1573, while serving as viceroy of Naples and desperate to receive orders from the king, Cardinal Granvelle jested to a colleague, 'if he must wait for death, he wanted it to come from Spain, for then it would never arrive'. Three years later, in Rome, Granvelle again complained:

> I am idle here, waiting to see what happens and watching as if from a window as the bulls of the world fight. To be sure, I sometimes want to come down and throw my stick at them, to hurry them along, because travelling as slowly as we do is causing great damage to public affairs.[37]

The cardinal knew whereof he spoke. In 1560, when he was Philip's principal minister in the Netherlands, he received a complaint from Gonzalo Pérez, who was trying to coordinate the foreign policy of the entire Monarchy: 'I have been ill these past few days, but that has not prevented me from attending to business punctually, since decisions are taken so slowly that even a cripple could keep up with them.' A few years later Granvelle's brother, a senior ambassador waiting in vain for instruction, petulantly observed: 'As for our master, everything is put off until the morrow, and the main decision taken in everything is never to take a decision.'[38]

Foreign observers agreed. According to the French ambassador in 1560, Philip's decision 'to be master, minister and secretary at the same time is a great virtue, but it produces such notable delays and confusion that all those who reside here to ask for something are desperate'. A decade later his successor complained that 'the decisions of the Spanish court are so uncertain and take so long that those who think they will receive dispatches in a week will not get them within a month.' In 1577 the papal secretary of state, waiting in vain for the king to commit his resources to an invasion of Ireland, fumed that 'The sole cause of this dilatoriness is His Majesty's irresolution.'[39]

Don Diego de Córdoba, a courtier who served Philip for three decades, was particularly outspoken on this subject. In 1560 he regretted that 'There is so much business to transact that we spent the whole day with our heads buried in paperwork. If you take a day off, when you return you pay for it sevenfold'; and a decade later he claimed that life at court had become 'papers and more papers, and the quantity increases every day' because the king 'writes memoranda every hour, and even when he is getting up, eating or retiring his [valets] come in with papers that, in the end, are not worth a fig'. In 1574 Don Diego delivered his most memorable comment on the subject: 'His Majesty has been working in recent days even more than usual in reading and writing papers, until they come out of his backside (may Your Lordship forgive me) . . . because on Saturday morning at 3 o'clock he had terrible diarrhoea.'[40]

In part, this was the inevitable corollary of the king's insistence on keeping the central government compartmentalized, on transacting everything in writing and on reserving so many matters for his own personal scrutiny – and this gave rise (to adapt Don Diego's metaphor) to the king's logorrhoea. Thus one day in 1565, having already written twice to Pedro de Hoyo, one of his secretaries, Philip suddenly thought of something else: 'In both of the notes

that I sent to you today I wanted to say something that I will tell you now, but I kept on forgetting, although I had it on the tip of my tongue.' And what was this urgent piece of information? That he had decided *not* to send a particular edition of the Bible to the Escorial, because the library there already had one. Two years later, 'Although I have 100,000 papers in front of me' Philip stopped what he was doing to remind Hoyo about 'the stones that we still lack' to complete a phase of construction at the Escorial chapel and that 'the small pond currently under construction' at the Casa de Campo, a royal park on the outskirts of Madrid, 'needs to be completed'.[41]

One might argue that the king was entitled to devote detailed attention to the various country retreats where he spent so much of his time, but some of the other matters that absorbed him are astonishing. Gracián's register frequently lists the 'trivia [*menudencias*]' on which Philip insisted on spending so many hours, and his exasperation shines through with particular brilliance in his entry for 2 June 1573, at a critical time for the war effort in both the Netherlands and the Mediterranean. 'I went to San Jerónimo before lunch, summoned by His Majesty' where 'the whole day was wasted' – an eloquent term! – 'in discussing and conferring about transferring the corpses of the prince [don Carlos] and the queen [Isabel] to the Escorial'.[42] The following year, Philip began his response to a letter from the Inquisitor-General: 'I will respond to the rest of what you say with a few words, because I lack the time for many' – and then filled three pages with comments. One night in 1575, Philip began a long note to a minister: 'It's 11 p.m. and I am still waiting for the packet for Juan Vázquez [patronage secretary] that you need to send me; but I can't wait for it any more, since my eyes and head are weary, and also I need to go to church and attend Mass tomorrow' – but he still postponed going to bed by writing two pages about matters that (as Don Diego de Córdoba would have said) 'in the end, are not worth a fig'.[43] When one of his ministers tried irony to bridle the king's enthusiasm to know and do everything – 'I am sorry to fatigue Your Majesty with such trifling matters' – the king replied imperviously 'They do not fatigue me, they delight me!' On at least one occasion he confessed that he scribbled simply for the sake of it: 'There's no need for you to respond,' he assured Mateo Vázquez after a tirade that covered several pages, 'because I only tell you all this in order to relax'. Relax![44]

'The largest brain in the world'

Exchanges such as these vindicate critics like Córdoba who claimed that the king wasted his time on trivia instead of taking crucial decisions on which the fate of the Monarchy depended. In 1574, the Venetian ambassador asserted that 'the king spends a lot of time on trivia which deprive him of time to deal with more important matters'; while ten years later, Granvelle complained bitterly:

> I see in all matters these delays, so pernicious and in so many ways prejudicial to our own affairs, including the most important ones, which become lost to view with so much delay. And the reason is that His Majesty wants to do and see everything, without trusting anyone else, busying himself with so many petty details that he has no time left to resolve what matters most.

Somewhat later the papal nuncio in Spain complained that 'His Majesty wants to see and do every single thing himself, yet that would not be possible even if he had ten hands and as many heads'.[45] But the most comprehensive indictment of Philip's refusal to delegate came in 1589 from Don Juan de Silva, who served Philip for over half a century as page, soldier, ambassador and councillor. 'The detailed attention that His Majesty devotes to the most trifling things is a subject for regret,' Silva began, 'because when a man finds things to do in order to avoid working, it is what we call a pastime; but when he works in order to find things to do it cannot be given the name it deserves.' He continued,

> His Majesty's brain, although it must be the largest in the world, like that of any other human being, is not capable of organizing the multitude of his affairs without making some division between those that he should deal with himself and those that he cannot avoid delegating to others. It is equally true that His Majesty does not make this distinction . . . Instead he leaves nothing entirely alone and takes from everyone the material that should be delegated (concerning individuals and details), and so does not concentrate on the general and the important because he finds them too tiring.[46]

Were these critics correct? Some of them, after all, wrote in anger and frustration: by 1584 Granvelle was an embittered old man who had been twice brutally shunted from the centre to the periphery of power, while Silva in 1589 sulked on his country estates because the king had not rewarded him as he felt he deserved. What really irritated Donà and the nuncio, for their part, was the fact that the king did not concentrate on the matters of primary concern to *them*. Nevertheless, the critics had a point. Although Philip sometimes complained that 'the many tasks and major matters of business at present' prevented him from doing the things he wanted, the same documents show that he always found time to spend on 'trivia' that interested him. Thus in August 1572, while struggling to suppress the Dutch Revolt and fearful that France might declare war on him, Philip received a letter from the prior of the monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial complaining that since his monks refused to accept his own allocation of cells, 'I beg Your Majesty to help us, as usual, because once it is known here that this is Your Majesty's decision everyone will be happy and will accept whatever they get'. Forgetting his 'many tasks and

major matters of business', the king leaped into action. He replied to the prior in his own hand: 'I accept the task of allocating the cells, because I have committed to memory the floor plan of the monastery; although I will also need a list of all the friars, arranged by seniority and the tasks they do.' As soon as the list arrived, the most powerful monarch in Christendom sat down to match the friars with the cells – and we know he did so in person because two weeks later the prior wrote again to say 'I received the allocation of cells that Your Majesty was pleased to make' and 'since it was written in Your Majesty's own hand, everyone saw it as a particular grace and favour'.[47] One must wonder whether the hours devoted to this exercise would have been better spent on considering how to resolve the rapidly worsening situation in the Netherlands.

The curse of audiences

The king himself saw things differently. For him, the principal causes of delay were the audiences demanded by both ministers and ambassadors, which often took up so many hours that afterwards he lacked both the time and the energy to plunge into the sea of paper that awaited him. In theory, whenever he was in Madrid, Philip gave audience 'between 9 and 10 a.m., and between 5 and 6 p.m.', and in addition he deliberately walked slowly on his way to and from Mass so that his subjects could speak to him or give him their petitions in person; but in practice, audiences consumed far more time.[48] When in 1577, someone suggested that his financial adviser Juan Fernández de Espinosa should come to see him at 2 p.m., Philip vehemently protested:

> Let him come at half past three, because it is already two o'clock, and I have no time to see the queen and her children except right now. And impress upon him that he will have to leave at four, because I have lots more audiences then – even though I have [already] held thirty today. And, in view of that, just look at the back-log of papers I shall have.

Six years later, the council of Finance begged the king to grant them a weekly audience, only to receive the crushing rebuke: 'I would be delighted to grant audiences to everyone', but 'it is better not to take up the time I need for so many things when it is in such short supply'.[49]

Philip's desire to limit the number of meetings made good sense. To begin with, as every administrator has found out to his cost, meetings always last too long. He complained one day in 1576 that the Portuguese ambassador 'was here and spoke to me for a long time, which made me waste the whole morning, and I have not been able to recover the time I lost'; and (a few months later)

'the French ambassador and others have just been here, which has cost me the whole day'. Indeed, the king once observed in desperation, 'audiences and paperwork just don't go together'.[50]

Philip himself was to blame for the duration of some meetings. In 1588, he granted an audience to José de Acosta, SJ about the problems faced by the Jesuit Order in Spain. The king read each point, after which Acosta offered clarification, but sometimes the king asked questions: while speaking of the 'secretary of Father Borja, the king interrupted and said "Which Father Borja?" I said "The one who was General of our Order". "You mean Father Francis" said the king; "Yes, sire, Father Francisco de Borja, our General." ' The meeting must have lasted at least an hour.[51] Audiences for ambassadors could take just as long – and up to fourteen envoys resided at the court of Spain at any time, each one constantly seeking the chance to explain in person a particular policy, seek clarification of the king's intentions or protest against one of his actions. Philip might procrastinate, but eventually each ambassador had to be both seen and heard – although, with a few exceptions, he seldom said much to them. Leonardo Donà, who wrote down every word spoken at each audience, seldom recorded more than one sentence ('although, as usual, his words were most gracious': see plate 12).[52]

On occasion, the king seems to have 'tuned out' during audiences. In 1576, when an English envoy wanted to state his business to Philip 'by speache', Secretary of State Zayas replied 'that the king havinge infinite matters of great ymportaunce, that he could not well remember the particularities of things delivered unto him by speache'. The king did not deny it. Shortly before, when a minister asked Mateo Vázquez to arrange a meeting, Philip confessed 'I would be glad to see him but, really, I do not have the time, and little of what is said to me at audiences stays in my head – but don't tell anyone that. I mean in most audiences, not all.' At other times, however, the king listened intently. When Donà told him during an audience in 1573 that Venice had defected from its Spanish alliance and made a separate peace with the Turks, Philip listened to the terms of the treaty impassively – except, Donà wrote, that 'his mouth made a very small, ironic movement, smiling thinly'. But the silence concealed vindictive fury: later that day, when he complained to a minister that the Venetians 'had made peace with the Turks' he added malevolently: 'I hope to God that those who suffer worse from this will be them'.[53]

Those who wanted an audience experienced the greatest frustration when Philip left Madrid for one of his country retreats. In one of the anecdotes about the king with which Diego de Simancas filled his dyspeptic autobiography, he affirmed that he had gone to Madrid expressly 'to pay his respects to the king', but Philip 'had unexpectedly left for El Escorial. I wanted to go there, but was told that I should not take the trouble because the king would soon be back. He

stayed away a whole month. That's why they say "His exits are predictable; his returns are unpredictable"'. In 1586 the papal nuncio lamented that 'it is rather irritating to have the king living so close [at the Escorial], and not occupied with anything important [*non ocupato in cosa d'importanza*], when for four months I have been unable to secure an audience and I have received an answer to none – or very few – of the memorials I have sent him in this time'.[54]

Eventually, both ministers and foreign diplomats learned to respect the king's preferences. Thus Ambassador Fourquevaux of France deliberately delayed compliance with an express order from Paris to seek an audience, because he knew that Philip 'prefers ambassadors to deal with him by letter rather than in person while he resides in his country houses'. Similarly, when an extraordinary ambassador arrived in Madrid from Venice to congratulate Philip on the victory of Lepanto, Donà did not allow him to ask for an audience until the king returned from the Escorial, because 'His Majesty does not want ambassadors to come and worry him there'.[55] Some ambassadors even understood why: Donà's successor reported that although Philip 'spends most of his time away from the Court, in part to escape from tiring audiences and in part to take care of business matters better, he never stops reading and writing'. Fray José de Sigüenza, who observed the king at the Escorial for a quarter of a century, agreed: 'He managed to do more here in one day than in four days in Madrid, thanks to his tranquil lifestyle.'[56] But a 'tranquil lifestyle' was only one of the reasons why Philip spent so much time at the monastery he had constructed. He could also spend more time there communing with God about how to cope with the blizzard of problems, great and small, that beset him.

CHAPTER FIVE

The king and God

Keeping the faith

Luis Cabrera de Córdoba's *History of Philip II, king of Spain*, the best account of the king's life written by someone who knew him personally, opens with a striking frontispiece. The king, in armour and with his sword drawn, stands as the sole barrier that prevents heavily armed men from attacking the Virgin Mary, who has placed the king's cloak over her arm while she holds the cross with one hand and a chalice with the other. The motto reads *Suma ratio pro religione*: 'The first priority is religion' (see plate 13). The image epitomizes Cabrera de Córdoba's book, in which Philip the Pious, sole defender of the Catholic Church, always put the protection of the faith before secular goals; but in reality the place of religion in Philip's life, both public and private, was far more complex.

The religious habits learned by the king as a child remained with him for ever. When in 1568 Don John of Austria left the court as Captain-General of the fleet, Philip began 'The Instruction for my brother' in just the same way as his father had done for him twenty-five years before (chapter 1): with his religious duties. 'First, since the foundation and origin of all things and of all good decisions lies with God, I strictly charge you, as a good and true Christian, that you take Him as the origin and foundation in everything you undertake and execute; and that you entrust all your affairs and concerns to God.' Next, Don John must 'take very good care to attend and practise confession, especially at Easter and other festivals, and to receive the Holy Sacrament when you are in areas and places where you can do so; and when you are on land to attend Mass every day; and to say your prayers and private devotions whenever you have an hour or a moment on your own'.[1]

This was a precise reflection of the king's own religious regimen. He attended Mass daily, heard sermons at least once a week and confessed and received communion four times a year. He also spent much time in private

devotions. His valet Jehan Lhermite reported that 'ever since I began to know and serve him' – that is, from 1590 – 'not a single day passed in which the king did not devote a long period' to 'contemplation or mental prayer'. Lhermite also noted that 'there was not a corner of his bedroom where one did not see a pious image of some saint or a crucifix, and he always kept his eyes fixed and absorbed on these images, and his spirit lifted to the heavens'. Another valet, Juan Ruiz de Velasco, gave the king 'his books of devotions and opened in front of him a small portable oratory that he always took with him' with 'images of the Crucifixion and of Our Lady in silver bas relief, which had plenary indulgences attached to them. His Majesty spent several hours thinking about and pondering these divine and spiritual matters.'[2]

The bookcase filled with devotional works which the king kept by his bedside in the Escorial included some items that he had acquired as a child (such as the *Life of Christ* by Ludolf of Saxony, the Carthusian) while others reflected the vibrant spirituality of Spain's Counter-Reformation Church, such as the *Collected Works* of Juan of Ávila, Teresa of Ávila (the only female author in the king's collection) and Luis of Granada. A *Roman martyrology*, a life of Diego of Alcalá, some santorals, and books about the Marian shrines at Guadalupe, Montserrat and Loreto testified to Philip's devotion to the Virgin Mary and the saints; while several liturgical works (a breviary, a missal and a copy of the Polyglot Bible, all in special presentation copies from the Plantin Press of Antwerp) no doubt helped him to follow church services from his bedroom. In 1597, at the age of 70, when he bequeathed to his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia 'an image of Our Lady and her blessed son' which 'I have heard belonged first to the Catholic Queen [Isabella] my great-grandmother', he noted that his mother the empress had given it to him 'and I have always carried it with me since the year 1535'.[3]

Periodically the king withdrew from government in order to concentrate on his devotions. He went on 'retreat' during Holy Week and at times of severe mental strain (such as after the death of a family member) as well as for his routine devotions. In June 1572, when a courier arrived late one evening with documents from several councils, including one concerning the rapid spread of rebellion in the Netherlands, 'His Majesty ordered that it should not be delivered to him until the next day, in the morning, because he had confessed that evening and would take communion early the next day.'[4] Five years later, when his ministers sent him papers on Holy Saturday, the king exploded: 'It seems that in Madrid they think that we have no Holy Week, Easter, confession and communion here' at the Escorial. 'Since I went to confession today, and have many other things to do, I cannot look at any of these.'[5] Throughout the liturgical year, delays arose whenever the king attended a service ('I don't think I can manage this tomorrow, because it's a day of matins and vespers') or heard a sermon ('I can't send you any more tonight because we had a sermon today').[6]

No doubt these numerous religious activities allowed the king to step back from the constant stress of having to take decisions and renewed his ability to cope with broader issues. In 1579, while trying to rationalize the arrest of his Secretary of State Antonio Pérez, the perceptive Venetian ambassador in Madrid, Gianfrancesco Morosini, noted a striking parallel between the king's behaviour on this occasion and in a similar crisis eleven years before:

> It seems that His Majesty had thought about this most carefully because the previous morning he confessed and took communion in the royal chapel, even though it was not a church festival and he had not taken communion privately like that for many years; but the coincidence that he did exactly the same when he resolved to arrest his son Don Carlos [in 1568] leads one to believe that in making his decision he wanted to entrust this important matter first to God.

Fray José de Sigüenza likewise speculated that when Philip 'spent time alone in prayer', he was no doubt 'rendering accounts to his true Lord and King; and in doing so, no doubt because God secretly inspired him, he worked out what he should do next'.[7]

The obsequious friar exaggerated slightly. On the eve of the patronal festival of St Lawrence in 1571, while the monks at the Escorial celebrated the various offices, a minister told a colleague that 'His Majesty attended all of them – although during matins he was writing the note to you that accompanies this'. Three months later the king returned a dossier to Mateo Vázquez with the admission, 'I have seen all of this, albeit in haste and most of it during vespers'; and in 1584, while at the Escorial during Holy Week, although he 'sat through two of the longest sermons I have ever heard in my life', he confessed to his daughters 'I slept through part of them'.[8] Even when awake, Philip's obsessive attention to detail could interfere with his devotions. Thus, at the first Mass celebrated in the basilica of the Escorial, a monk noted that 'the Catholic King, the great expert on all matters liturgical', was 'looking at his missal to make sure we followed the directions there, and if he noticed any departure from the directions he immediately sent word'. Indeed, he added waspishly, 'the king knew more and cared more about the affairs of the sacristy than the sacristans themselves'.[9]

The king also sought to supplement the effects of his personal devotion by mobilizing the faith of others. He periodically commanded every prelate in his dominions to arrange public prayers for causes that he deemed important. In the 1560s, these included the union of the Church, the success of the council of Trent, the defeat of the Turks, the suppression of the Dutch Revolt, the health of the queen, the end of a plague epidemic and the defeat of the Moriscos of the Alpujarras. In the 1570s, the king established a comprehensive

prayer-chain throughout Castile to seek divine guidance and protection, and instructed prelates to mobilize 'those whose prayers are likely to be most accepted by God'.[10]

Philip strove not only to accentuate the positive, but also to eliminate the negative. Fearing that unless his subjects lived godly lives he might forfeit divine support, the king periodically called upon his clergy to admonish their flocks to improve their ways. In 1577, as he wavered between war and peace in the Netherlands, he instructed all bishops 'to pay special attention to the elimination and punishment of sins, concentrating on any faults among the clergy and punishing them'. He also instructed all secular judges to root out sin among his subjects because 'we all need to placate Our Lord who, the evidence suggests, is highly offended by all our faults'.[11]

When taking decisions that involved complex moral judgements, Philip often sought the advice of special committees of theologians (*juntas de teólogos*): on how best to raise war funds from the clergy of Castile; what to do when excommunicated by Pope Paul IV; how to plan for the council of Trent; which policy to pursue towards heresy in the Netherlands; and whether or not to enforce his claim to the Portuguese throne. His normal religious sounding board, however, was his confessor, whom Philip deluged with demands as to whether 'in conscience' he could authorize a policy suggested by his ministers. Although his final testament commanded his executors to burn all correspondence with his confessors without reading it, a few exchanges with Fray Diego de Chaves (royal confessor between 1578 and 1592) have survived, all of them terse but decisive. Many concerned matters of finance. Thus, when asked whether a draft proposal for rescheduling the king's debts 'is justified in good conscience', Chaves replied that same day: 'in this case I say that it is justified, and I can provide reasons if necessary'. Six years later, Philip sent Chaves a list of candidates for vacant bishoprics in New Spain, and once again the reply reached the royal desk the same day, together with an evaluation of each candidate and a recommendation. The king accepted them, 'because I am obliged to nominate the best one' – adding somewhat uneasily 'and if I have not got it right, I will at least have done my duty'.[12]

From time to time, Chaves raised issues of conscience with the king on his own initiative. In 1588, he chided Philip 'not only as a theologian, but as your confessor' about his inaction over a contentious issue; and four years later he flatly refused to grant the king absolution unless he followed Chaves's advice. Philip took the threat extremely seriously, and sent his chamberlain to find out more.

> Here is the dossier for Fray Diego . . . Give it to him today and bring me his answer tonight. Do try to calm him so that I can gain the [Easter] jubilee this

> week . . . If he should threaten to stand firm, you can tell him that you will inform me, and ask that the matter be left there until after I have gained the jubilee this week.

Chaves did indeed stand firm. He complained that the king's failure to appoint a president for the council of Castile (the senior law officer of the kingdom) denied his subjects justice, and then added a wicked parallel about the way the king himself treated offenders at his court:

> I, Your Majesty's confessor, cannot say more, nor does God oblige me to do so. It is not my job to arraign Your Majesty before Judge Armenteros [the magistrate responsible for law and order in the royal court]. However, the same God does oblige me to deny Your Majesty all sacraments unless you do what I say.

Philip crumbled: the candidate favoured by Chaves soon became president of the council. It is not hard to see why the king ordered his executors to burn such exchanges.[13]

Philip did not rely solely on the living to mobilize supernatural assistance for his cause: he also sought the intercession of the saints. He displayed a 'holy greed' (in Sigüenza's words) for relics, beginning in 1550 when he travelled through Cologne on his Grand Tour and came upon 'a huge trove of heads and bones' of presumed saints. Philip and his entourage bought many of them and took them back to Spain. Seven years later, when his troops captured the town of St Quentin from the French, the king took under his personal protection 'many relics' including 'the body of St Quentin and the head of St Andrew' and placed them 'with great reverence' upon 'the altar of his chapel' in the camp, before sending them back to Spain.[14] In 1567, at his request, the pope granted Philip permission to collect relics wherever he wished, and over the next thirty years he assembled at the Escorial, among thousands of religious items, 12 entire bodies, 144 heads and 306 limbs of various saints – a total of 7,422 relics, many of them with a label attached written in the king's own hand (see plate 14).[15]

Philip's remarkable devotion, and his conviction that he enjoyed a special relationship with God, manifested itself in other ways. Like the biblical Three Kings, each Christmas he donated gilded chalices containing gold, frankincense and myrrh; he repeatedly referred to himself as 'father and shepherd' of his subjects; and he filled his letters and papers with references to God. Thus in 1559, when he could not decide whether to return to Spain or remain in the Netherlands Philip confided in his principal adviser Granvelle that 'since this depends solely on the will of God, I can only wait for whatever he is pleased to grant; and I hope that, since He has removed worse obstacles from my path, He will also remove this one'. Just after his return to the peninsula, he told Granvelle

'Above all things I entrust matters of religion to your care, because you can see how necessary it is, and how few people in this world protect it. And so the few of us who do so must take greater care of Christendom, and if necessary we will lose everything in order to do in this what we should.' In 1565 he urged an adviser 'to tell me in all things what you think is best for the service of God, which is my principal aim, and therefore for my service'.[16]

Philip attributed every success and victory to divine intervention and favour, assuring ministers that 'God did this'. When touching the bones of Fray Diego de Alcalá seemed to have saved his son and heir, Don Carlos, as he lay at death's door in 1562, the king saw it as a miracle and pressured the pope to canonize Fray Diego until he got his way in 1588. Conversely, Philip rationalized every failure and defeat as some sort of divine test of his steadfastness. When in spring 1578 drought gripped Castile, the king reasoned 'Our Lord must be very angry with us, because He is withholding the rain that we need so much'; and after his beloved nephew Wenceslas died a few months later he observed philosophically 'It is certainly a tragedy, but God (who is responsible) must know better.'[17] The king expected God not only to 'reward' his constancy but also to let him achieve his goals – if necessary with a miracle. Thus in 1574, as bad news poured in, Philip lamented to his private secretary and chaplain Mateo Vázquez, 'Unless God performs a miracle, which our sins do not merit, it is no longer possible to maintain ourselves for [more than a few] months, let alone years.' News of further reverses, instead of leading him to reconsider his unsuccessful policies, reinforced his expectation of a miracle: 'May God help us with a miracle. I tell you that we need one so much that it seems to me that He *must* choose to give us a miracle, because without one I see everything in the worst situation imaginable.'[18]

Philip saw no difference between his own interests and those of God. With stunning presumption, in 1573 he reassured an ailing minister, 'I hope that God will give you good health and a long life, since they are engaged in God's service and in mine, which is the same thing'; while three years later, on hearing that another of his officials had fallen ill, he wrote 'I trust that God will give him strength and health [to deal with] all the great troubles that afflict His service and mine'. Two decades later he still deployed the same rhetoric, calling on the council of the Inquisition to continue doing 'what is best for the service of God and myself, and the authority of the Holy Office, because one cannot separate one from the others.'[19]

Enforcing the faith

Philip's enthusiasm for punishing heresy constitutes the most famous (or infamous) reflection of his conviction that he knew exactly what God intended.

He ardently supported the burning of some 300 Protestant heretics in England between 1555 and 1558 and ordered the executions of some 300 more in the Netherlands between 1556 and 1565 (chapters 3 and 8). Shortly after his return to Spain in 1559, he attended a great auto-de-fé in Valladolid and during the ceremony drew his sword – just as in the frontispiece of the *History* by Cabrera de Córdoba – and swore that he would always uphold the authority of the Holy Office (see chapter 7). And he did. He attended four more autos-de-fé, often (as at Valladolid) accompanied by members of the royal family, and he regularly consulted the Inquisitors-General (whom he had appointed) on a wide range of business. When in 1577 Cardinal Gaspar de Quiroga assured him that 'Teresa de Jesús is a good nun, of admirable life and example, who constantly occupies and dedicates herself to God's service', Philip promised 'I will write to the corregidor [senior magistrate] of Ávila just as you suggest' with orders to protect the future saint and 'her nuns' against their rivals. In 1578 Quiroga moved into 'the apartment of my late brother', Don John, in the Madrid Alcázar, and thenceforth he boasted almost constant access to the king.[20]

Philip repeatedly urged other Catholic rulers to keep the faith. When he heard in 1572 that Charles IX had followed his advice and authorized the massacre of French Protestants, Philip declared, 'I experienced one of the greatest pleasures that I have had in all my life'; and when the French ambassador provided some details on the slaughter at an audience, Philip 'began to laugh, showing signs of extreme pleasure and satisfaction', and claimed that no king was Charles's equal 'in either valour or prudence'. (The ambassador unctuously rejoiced that the king of France had 'repaid the master of his apprenticeship so well'.)[21] Philip also favoured initiatives that might end the schism between Catholics and Protestants. He repeatedly gave orders for public prayers 'for the union of the Christian religion'; and when in 1562 Pope Pius IV agreed to reconvene the council of Trent Philip welcomed the decision enthusiastically because it seemed like 'the last refuge in which Christendom hopes to find a remedy for the ills and divisions that have sprung up in religion'. The king even claimed that 'if it could be, and if the state of our affairs would allow, we would attend the council in person', and although in the event he stayed in Spain, he laboured to ensure that as many prelates and theologians as possible from his own dominions attended.[22] Moreover, as long as the council remained in session, he bombarded the pope with advice on points that he felt required further attention, and he tried unsuccessfully to prolong the assembly until they had been resolved. He also deluged his ambassador in Trent with instructions to keep certain issues off its agenda because he feared they would perpetuate the schism (as indeed they did). As soon as the council had closed, Philip urged his ambassador (albeit 'with all possible

dissimulation and dexterity, to avoid causing resentment or suspicion') to oppose any attempt to refer the decrees to the pope for confirmation before they could be executed.[23]

The king had two motives for such anxiety: he feared that Pius IV would either modify the decrees or fail to ratify them at all, and he worried that the pope might use the Tridentine decrees as a pretext to interfere in his ecclesiastical patronage. Therefore, as soon as Pius verbally endorsed the decrees in January 1564, Philip issued a proclamation that the Tridentine decrees must henceforth be observed and enforced throughout his realms – the first monarch to do so – but his proclamation made no mention of the pope's prior approval. Instead, it proudly stated:

> Since His Holiness has sent us the decrees of the said Holy Council, printed in their original form, we as Catholic King [*nos, como Rey Católico*] . . . wish that they be observed, followed and executed in our kingdoms . . . We order and ordain all archbishops, bishops and other prelates, all Generals, Provincials, Priors and Guardians of Religious Orders, and all other persons to whom they refer, to publish immediately the said decrees in their churches, districts and dioceses and any other convenient location, and to observe, follow and execute them.[24]

Moreover, Philip added a cover letter to the proclamation sent to senior ecclesiastics which made clear that, although the king had issued a comprehensive approval 'to serve as an example for all of Christendom', nevertheless 'the execution of some of the decrees may cause inconvenience or prejudice, both to the Church and ecclesiastical estate and to His Majesty's rights and preeminences'. He warned recipients to expect further directions – and they came in several instalments. In July, upon learning that some cathedral chapters had sent agents to Rome to secure dispensations from individual aspects of the Tridentine decrees, Philip ordered that in future all doubts and petitions for exemption must be referred to him alone. In September, having heard that some prelates had issued their own abridged or annotated version of the decrees, the king commanded them all to be recalled: in future only texts approved by him should circulate. In December, he ordered that 'If any bull or brief arrives, or has arrived, from His Holiness . . . concerning the decrees, send them to me without making use of them, so that in each case we can inform and advise His Holiness of what needs to be done.'[25]

In April 1565, Philip took the final step in securing his control over the Tridentine reforms: he charged each archbishop in Spain 'to convene, assemble and celebrate' a provincial council at the earliest opportunity, just as Trent required. His letter of convocation again expressed his desire to attend, but

added that 'our personal presence is not necessary, since we can achieve the same effect' by sending special commissioners (all of them laymen), who showered each synod with detailed royal comments. They 'clarified' what Trent had intended by changing what he did not like ('His Majesty desires that the rules of episcopal residence should be a little looser than those contained in the Tridentine decrees'). They forbade discussion of reforms that contradicted the law of the land (such as Session XXV, *De Reformatio*, chapter 3, which 'seems to authorize ecclesiastical judges to proceed against laymen, confiscating their goods and sequestering their persons, which the laws of this kingdom do not allow and should not allow'). They also repeated his prohibition on seeking clarification or support from Rome. Such measures ensured that the Tridentine decrees threatened neither the king's interests nor his laws. In the graphic phrase of one royal commissioner, the king had 'translated the council of Trent into Spanish'.[26]

When Pius IV ignored Philip's pleas regarding the best way in which to reform the Catholic Church, the king instructed his representative in Rome to remind the pope 'of things that affect our conscience, given the position in which God has placed us, and the attention that we must pay to religion in our kingdoms' and that 'we cannot, as father and shepherd of our subjects, avoid showing constant vigilance'. When his successor Pius V also ignored his requests, Philip instructed his ambassador in Rome to seek a private audience at which 'you will point out that the damage that may stem from this, if he does not believe me and remedy this, will be on his conscience and not on mine' – a passive-aggressive combination of pleas and threats that characterized many of Philip's communications with the pope.[27]

Apart from throwing his weight behind the council of Trent, Philip provided lavish funding and detailed editorial direction for another venture aimed at 'the reunion of our Christian faith': the Polyglot Bible, published in eight sumptuous volumes at Antwerp between 1569 and 1573. He entrusted the noted humanist Benito Arias Montano with oversight of the venture and instructed him to work with biblical scholars from Lutheran and other 'suspect' creeds, because the king hoped that providing agreed texts in Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic and Latin (Vulgate), with additional Latin versions specially translated from the Greek and Aramaic texts, would appeal to Protestant and Orthodox as well as to Catholic Christians. The motto chosen for the enterprise was PIETATIS CONCORDIAE and the title page boldly proclaimed that it was 'Intended for the piety and study of the Holy Church by Philip II, the Catholic King'. In case anyone missed this message, the second page displayed a female figure (representing Religion) holding a copy of the new Bible in one hand and a shield bearing Philip's insignia in the other. She stood upon a plinth inscribed with a legend that restated the king's initiative in producing this new tool for *all* Christians (see plates 15 and 16).

Philip II and the Papacy

Naturally, these unilateral efforts by Philip to reform and unite the Christian Church offended and alienated the Papacy. Gregory XIII (1572–85) declared that no layman could preside over future provincial councils, and when Philip nevertheless sent lay commissioners to convey his wishes to another series of clerical assemblies, Gregory rejected all the decrees submitted to him for approval – thereby beginning a petulant standoff: with one exception, no more provincial councils would assemble in Spain for three centuries. Such examples of papal intransigence seem to have left Philip genuinely mystified. In 1581 he let off steam to Granvelle:

> It is really something to see that I am the only ruler who truly reveres the Holy See, and yet instead of thanking me as they should, the popes take advantage of it to try and usurp the authority that is so necessary and beneficial to the service of God and to the sound government of what He has entrusted to me. It's the exact opposite of how they behave towards those who do the contrary![28]

Philip's perplexity arose not only from his conviction that he could interpret God's purpose better than anyone else, and that he could hold his own with any cleric on matters of theology, but also from the pretensions he inherited from 'our predecessors, the kings of Spain' who had claimed to act as *Rex et sacerdos*: king and priest. Philip seldom hesitated to remind the popes about his vast ecclesiastical powers and responsibilities. At an audience with Pius IV, just four days after his election, Ambassador Francisco de Vargas issued a stark warning: 'You should not meddle with the things that His Majesty has taken in hand.' And if the popes nevertheless 'meddled', Philip employed blackmail and threats to stop them. Three decades later, when Sixtus V refused the king's request to order a commission of inquiry into the Jesuit Order in Spain, Philip ordered his ambassador to threaten that, unless the pope acted, he would do the job himself.

> If, having listened to you and reviewed the relevant papers, His Holiness should take a contrary position, and refuse to entrust the investigation to a bishop [named by the king], you may tell him that I shall not ask again for the investigation but instead myself put in place the most appropriate remedy to prevent the dangers we fear.[29]

'There is no pope in Spain'

Like all Spanish rulers down to 1976, Philip exercised extensive ecclesiastical rights and privileges. He personally selected bishops and abbots not only in

Spain but also in Spanish America, Sicily and Naples – a right known as the *patronato real* – and when he succeeded to the crown of Portugal, Philip acquired parallel powers over the Lusitanian empire. Whenever a senior clerical position in his dominions fell vacant, the king 'as patron of the Church', instructed his ambassador to convey to the pope the virtues of his nominee and to request the necessary instruments of appointment, because the diocese 'will be well directed and governed by him, and my conscience satisfied'; and he begged the pope to believe the ambassador 'just as you would believe me.'[30] Senior appointments represented only a small fraction of Philip's patronage, however: each time a see fell vacant he allocated a host of pensions to other clerics payable from episcopal revenues, while in Castile alone he personally chose every year up to one hundred canons, deans, priors and chaplains from the lists of candidates submitted to him. Given the length of Philip's reign, and the extent of his dominions, he nominated far more ecclesiastics than any other early modern ruler, whether Catholic or Protestant.

And whom did he choose? Philip once boasted to the pope that, in his role as patron, 'I do not reward services by granting [ecclesiastical office], but rather I go and search in obscure corners for the most suitable subjects for Our Lord's work'; but the available evidence does not support this claim. Instead, we find that a substantial number of Philip's nominees came from the ranks (or the families) of his own employees. Of the 194 Spanish bishops whom he nominated, 45 had been inquisitors and 44 had served the king as judge or councillor. Philip also favoured his own employees when he made nominations for church pensions. Thus, those proposed to the pope in the course of 1578 included the illegitimate son of a bishop who was himself the illegitimate son of the Emperor Maximilian (Philip's great-grandfather); five royal judges; six inquisitors; fourteen sons, brothers or nephews of royal ministers; twenty-four chaplains and four cantors in the royal family's chapels; one doctor and the sons of six other medical officials of the royal family; and thirteen sons of other members of the royal household, including the king's shoemaker and the queen's candle-maker. Despite his boast about searching 'in obscure corners for the most suitable subjects for Our Lord's work', Philip thus appears to have used his church patronage to boost the salaries of his own employees.[31]

Another area in which Philip acted as 'king and priest', following in the footsteps of 'our predecessors, the kings of Spain', concerned an ecclesiastical sanction: the *exequatur*, the right to suppress any papal initiative of which the crown disapproved. Royal officials used the *exequatur* to hold up some papal bulls and briefs for years and to send them back to Rome for redrafting. Even the new catechism, missal and breviary issued by Pius V to provide a universal liturgy for Catholics provoked strenuous objections from Madrid. In 1566 copies of a new catechism that incorporated the doctrine approved at Trent

reached Spain, together with permission to make a Spanish translation; but, Philip's theologians studied the new catechism closely and claimed to find crypto-Protestant doctrines in it. The Inquisition therefore embargoed the text and forbade its use. An amended version of the Roman catechism in Latin appeared in Spain only in 1577, and the first vernacular translation of it – the only form suitable for use by ordinary Spaniards – not until 1777.

Throughout his reign, Philip attempted to exclude papal special envoys from his dominions. Soon after his election in 1566, Pius V decided to send out fact-finding commissions of inquiry to different parts of the Catholic world, but Philip prevented them from entering either Spain or the Netherlands. Next, alarmed by reports of clerical abuses in the Americas, Pius considered appointing a nuncio for the New World. To parry this threat, Philip set up a special committee of his own to find ways to improve ecclesiastical affairs there. Pius responded by creating a Congregation of Cardinals to propose remedies, and enthusiastically forwarded their recommendations to Spain – but Philip refused to accept any of them. Madrid's control over the American Church remained absolute and impregnable. Much the same situation prevailed elsewhere in Philip's Monarchy. According to the Spanish ambassador in Rome, Pius grumbled that 'he can do no more in Sicily than in Germany, because whenever he decides to do something, he runs into another Pius V appointed by the king who will undo it'. This complaint fell on deaf ears. Philip told Pius bluntly that 'in the rights that I have, and that my predecessors have handed down to me, there will be no change'. Or, as the president of the council of Castile memorably remarked during a discussion of church jurisdiction: 'There is no pope in Spain'.[32]

Messianic imperialism

Such endless wrangling between Rome and Madrid over relatively minor matters reflected incompatible visions. The popes had good reason to fear Philip, despite his obvious piety. In May 1527, the month of his birth, his father's army had sacked Rome and taken the pope a prisoner; thirty years later Philip's own forces had invaded papal territory and bombarded the Holy City. Although his troops withdrew after making peace, Philip retained great influence over Rome. He plied sympathetic cardinals with Spanish benefices and substantial pensions – by 1591, forty-seven of the seventy cardinals pocketed a Spanish pension – and he supplied the city with grain and wine from Sicily whenever necessary. At the pope's request, he provided galleys to get rid of corsairs and on one occasion sent troops to stifle a tax revolt. He also attempted to prevent the election as pope of 'pernicious or unfavourable' cardinals, starting in 1559 when Paul IV died. For four months, Ambassador Vargas struggled to arrange the election of a Hispanophile pope, or at least one who

was not Francophile. Philip never intervened directly in conclaves again until 1590–2, when he threatened to withhold grain shipments from Sicily to Rome and moved troops and galleys to the frontier of the Papal States in order to influence the choice of pontiff.

Some popes struck back. Paul IV excommunicated and declared war on Philip (chapter 3) while Gregory XIII tried to prevent the union of Spain and Portugal, provoking a splenetic outburst from the outraged king:

> No one knows better than Your Holiness the love and respect that I have for you; and the setbacks that have afflicted my dominions during your pontificate are also well known – most of them because I have taken upon my shoulders the defence of the Church and extirpation of heresy. And yet the more these setbacks have increased, the more Your Holiness seems to ignore them – something that simply amazes me.[33]

Papal 'ignorance' of the 'setbacks' continued. In the 1590s Clement VIII rejected the claim to the French crown advanced by Philip on behalf of his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia in favour of his arch-rival Henry of Navarre. In the Netherlands, Philip complained (not without reason) that the Papacy remained indifferent if not hostile to his struggle to regain and re-Catholicize the rebellious provinces. As he put it to Granvelle, 'so that you can see the big picture', the pope's indifference

> has me weary and very close to losing my patience . . . I believe that, if the Netherlands belonged to someone else, he would have performed miracles to prevent them being lost by the Church; but because they are my states, I believe he is prepared to see this happen because they will be lost by me.[34]

This was a shrewd point, elegantly phrased, but it overlooked the fact that Philip's dominions hemmed in the Papal States from both north and south, posing a political threat to papal authority, and that his messianic rhetoric challenged papal ideology.

Philip's messianism displayed many characteristics common to other Providential visions of the early modern period – such as the fulfilment of prophecies that predicted global upheaval as a prelude to unification; a 'foundational myth' that cast the king's empire as something new in the history of the world; the presumption that the end of time was imminent, so that immediate action was required to achieve all goals; and the assumption that the 'messiah' could both discern God's purpose for the world and pursue appropriate policies to achieve it better than anyone else. Philip's tour of the Netherlands in 1549 included many messianic moments (chapter 2; see plate 7), and more

followed after he became king of England. Thus the magnificent stained glass window commissioned by the king for the church of St John at Gouda in Holland to commemorate the victory of St Quentin shows in the upper section Solomon praying at the dedication of his Temple, and the voice of God responding 'I have heard your prayer, and if you walk in my sight as your father did, I shall perpetuate your royal throne for ever.' In the central section, Christ presides at the Last Supper and speaks with his disciple Philip, whose hand rests protectively on the shoulder of his namesake as he kneels in adoration with his wife Mary Tudor beside him (see plate 17).

This messianic mindset had far-reaching consequences. Above all, Philip's absolute certainty that he was doing God's work could make him unrealistic in the realm of politics. He often refused to devise contingency plans, apparently because if God fought on Spain's side any attempt to plan for possible failure could be construed as denoting a lack of faith. For similar reasons he regularly dismissed any suggestion by a subordinate that his orders were unrealistic – because, once again, these lesser mortals failed to understand that, in case of need, God would provide.

The full impact of Philip's faith-based strategy emerges most clearly in his dealings with England. He boasted that 'God has already granted that by my intervention and my hand that kingdom was previously restored to the Catholic Church', and this made him even less willing to listen to alternative strategies. Thus in 1570 Philip ordered the duke of Alba, his governor-general in the Netherlands, to prepare and lead an invasion to depose Elizabeth Tudor and replace her with her Catholic cousin, Mary Stuart. The king recognized that

> even though human prudence suggests many inconveniences and difficulties, and places before us worldly fears, Christian certitude and the confidence that we must justly have in the cause of God will remove them and inspire and strengthen us to overcome them. Certainly we could not avoid remaining with great guilt in our soul, and great regret, if I failed that queen [Mary] and those Catholics – or, rather, the faith – so that they suffered and she was lost.

Alba protested that this would be the wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time, adding with heavy irony: 'Even though the principal means must come from God, as Your Majesty very virtuously and piously suggests, nevertheless since He normally works through the resources He gives to humans, it seems necessary to examine which human resources would be needed to carry out your wishes' – and these 'resources', Alba added, were totally lacking.[35]

For a time, the king desisted, but during his first extended stay at the Escorial in summer 1571 he returned to the offensive, informing Alba that, since Mary Stuart was 'the true and legitimate successor' to the English throne, 'which

Elizabeth holds as a tyrant', the intervention of just 6,000 troops from the Netherlands, led by the duke in person, would make it 'easy to kill or capture Elizabeth and place the queen of Scots at liberty and in possession of the kingdom'. No doubt aware that this would still seem unrealistic to his lieutenant, Philip asserted that, 'since the cause is so much His, God will enlighten, aid and assist us with His mighty hand and arm, so that we will get things right'.[36]

The king's religious elation amazed even councillors who had worked with him for years. 'It is extraordinary to see the ardour of His Majesty' for invading England, one of them wrote to a colleague, 'and how little it has been cooled by the news that the queen knows about [his] plans, and by the mistrust of the duke [of Alba].' A few days later the same minister added 'I have never seen the king so animated in any other item of business'. Even Feria, who had served as Philip's ambassador in England and thereafter championed the English Catholic exiles at the Spanish court, voiced similar incredulity: 'His Majesty is so ardent about this English business that I seem lukewarm by contrast.'[37] His ardour led Philip to try and dazzle Alba with another display of messianic rhetoric. 'No one can deny that this venture involves many and great difficulties, and that if it goes wrong we will incur considerable risks,' he conceded; but

> in spite of all this I desire this enterprise so much, and I have such complete confidence that God our Lord, to whose service it is dedicated (because I have no personal ambition here), will guide and direct it, and I hold my charge from God to do this to be so explicit, that I am extremely determined and resolved to proceed and participate, doing on my side everything possible in this world to promote and assist it.

Once again, Alba countered the king's spiritual blackmail with a torrent of practical objections, concluding briskly: 'As I have already told Your Majesty, I have not begun to make any preparations whatsoever.'[38] This dialogue of the deaf only ended when Alba discovered that Elizabeth had placed Mary Stuart under close guard and arrested her leading English supporter.

This failure did nothing to change Philip's messianic style of strategizing. He continued to use moral blackmail to persuade his lieutenants that, however desperate the situation, God would provide. Thus in 1585 he informed the duke of Parma, Alba's successor as governor-general of the Netherlands, that although

> I hope that Our Lord, in whose service this war [in the Netherlands] has been waged and sustained at the cost of so much blood and money . . . will arrange things with His divine providence, either through war or negotiation, so that the world will know, by the happy outcome, the fruit of trusting in Him, always keeping before us this firm resolve; nevertheless, should God be

> pleased to permit another outcome, for our sins, it would be better to spend everything in His cause and service, than for any reason to waver.

Two years later, when his leading naval commander complained about the dangerous folly of sailing against England in midwinter as Philip proposed, the king replied serenely: 'We are fully aware of the risk that is incurred by sending a major fleet in winter through the Channel without a safe harbour, but . . . since it is all for His cause, God will send good weather.' Nine months later, after a storm had damaged some Armada vessels, driven others into Corunna and scattered the rest, the king reassured his dispirited commander:

> If this were an unjust war, one could indeed take this storm as a sign from Our Lord to cease offending Him; but being as just as it is, one cannot believe that He will disband it, but rather will grant it more favour than we could hope . . . I have dedicated this enterprise to God. Get on, then, and do your part![39]

Occasionally, the catastrophic failure of his plans temporarily punctured the king's confidence. When he first learned the scale of the Armada's failure, in November 1588, Philip confided to his secretary: 'Very soon we shall find ourselves in such a state that we shall wish that we had never been born – at least I will, so as not to see it. If God does not send us a miracle (which is what I hope from Him), I hope to die and go to Him before this happens – which is what I pray for, so as not to see so much misfortune and disgrace.' Such moments of doubt about the congruence of 'the service of God and myself' proved both rare and short-lived, however. Throughout the 1590s, Philip declared that 'I could not – and cannot – abandon' his costly wars against the Dutch, English and French Protestants 'because I have such a special obligation to God and the world to deal with them'. A few months later, when one of his ministers made an impassioned plea for a reduction in military spending in France, the Netherlands and the Atlantic, Philip reminded him that 'These are not matters that can be dropped . . . because they involve the cause of religion, which must take precedence over everything.'[40]

Philip's messianism in context

Most of Philip's subjects boasted a messianic outlook almost indistinguishable from his. At the beginning of the reign, a tract by a court theologian emphasized the king and priest link:

> Princes, in their role as princes, possess the cure of souls. This means that it does not suffice for them to reign and rule the state in peace, but they are also

> personally obliged to strive to make their subjects good and virtuous . . . Princes will have to give account to God, at the hour of their death and on the Judgment Day, not only of themselves, but also of all their kingdoms and of all the damage that occurred through their weakness and negligence.[41]

Poets, too, sacralized the king's cause. In the 1570s, Fernando de Herrera's 'Canticle for the victory of Lepanto' drew a parallel with the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea; Juan Rufo's *La Austriada* (1584) hailed the king as 'God's shepherd on Earth'; and according to Hernando de Acuña's sonnet, 'To the king our lord,' published in 1591:

> The glorious day, sire, either approaches
> Or has dawned, when the Heavens foretold
> One flock and one shepherd in the world . . .
> And announced to the earth, for its accord,
> One monarch, one empire and one sword.[42]

Catholic artists also explicitly attributed the king's achievements to the divine favour he had earned. Many works of art produced in his lifetime portrayed Philip in direct communion with God. In Titian's *Offering of Philip II* (1573) the king ostentatiously dedicates his newborn son to God in gratitude for the victory at Lepanto (see plate 31); in El Greco's *Dream of Philip II* (1579) he kneels confidently to await his fate on the Judgment Day; in a Netherlands engraving of 1585, Jesus directly confers the insignia of power on Philip, while the pope enviously looks on. In perhaps the best-known portrait of the king, by Sofonisba Anguissola, the king holds a rosary – as if the artist had surprised him at his devotions – while Pompeo Leone's larger-than-life sculptures show Philip and his family at prayer right beside the high altar in the Escorial basilica (see plates 18, 19 and 22).

At least three composers produced religious music that upheld Philip's messianic claims. In the 1550s, Bartolomé de Escobedo composed a Mass for six voices that juxtaposed PHILIPPUS REX HISPANIAE (Philip king of Spain) with the regular liturgy throughout:

> Glory to God on high,
> And on earth peace to men of goodwill.
> We praise thee, we bless thee
> PHILIPPUS REX HISPANIAE . . .
>
> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
>
> PHILIPPUS REX HISPANIAE.

In 1596 Philippe Rogier, master of the royal chapel, did much the same in his *Missa Philippus Secundus Rex Hispaniae* for four or six voices; while Fernando de las Infantas composed a motet for six voices beseeching St Jerome to assist 'his most pious servant' Philip II (and other members of the royal family).[43]

Finally, Philip's messianic outlook drew strength from the fact that his family and most of his ministers shared and supported it. His sister Juana took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and joined the Jesuit Order (chapter 9); while his warrior brother Don John of Austria invoked divine intervention with surprising frequency. In a letter to his half-sister Margaret of Parma on the eve of his departure for the Netherlands in 1576, Don John wished that God 'would assist me with some miracles, because if he does not perform one I do not know how life can return to a body that is at its last breath'.[44] Ruy Gómez de Silva, trusted royal adviser as well as ally of both Juana and Don John, in 1559 informed the General of the Jesuits 'how attached I am to your Order, and for this reason I want there to be a [Jesuit] College in Mélito', his new Neapolitan fief. A decade later, Ruy Gómez and his wife, the princess of Éboli, 'gave an excellent welcome' to Teresa of Ávila when she arrived at their request to arrange 'the foundation of a monastery and nunnery in Pastrana', their principal residence.[45] In 1568, Don Francés de Álava, Philip's ambassador in France, protested that 'If I am [required] to become an instrument that raises human considerations above divine ones, I hope that God removes me from this world'; while the massacre of St Bartholomew in 1572 impressed even the duke of Alba as clear evidence of God's efforts to further both His own cause and that of Spain. He told a colleague exuberantly:

> The events in Paris and France are wonderful, and truly show that God has been pleased to change and rearrange matters in the way that He knows will favour the conservation of the true Church and advance His holy service and His glory. And, besides all that, in the present situation, these events could not have come at a better time for the affairs of the king our lord, for which we cannot sufficiently thank God's goodness.[46]

Even Antonio Pérez, a minister infamous for his dissolute life, went on a pilgrimage in 1575; and as he organized the departure of Don John of Austria from Italy to the Netherlands the following year he rejoiced 'that something so important to the service of God and of Your Majesty – which is one and the same thing – is going well'. In 1584 the president of the council of Castile expressed the hope 'that the service of God and His Majesty will take precedence over everything else' in public affairs; and three years later Don Juan de Idiáquez, secretary of state, urged his master to persevere with his plans to invade England, no matter what the cost:

> It will be such an agreeable service to Our Lord that it is impossible that He would not lend His hand in the execution of this enterprise, openly showing through Your Majesty and his affairs how he rewards those who serve him in this way. I believe that everyone is obliged to serve Him according to their strength, because He gives that strength and He can also take it away; and He confers on Your Majesty so much power and favour that it can be taken as a certain pledge for everything we may do to please Him.[47]

Naturally, the king's numerous clerical officials expressed similar views. In 1574, Mateo Vázquez consoled his master, who was disheartened by the situation in the Low Countries:

> God always looks out for Your Majesty, and in your greatest necessities gives the greatest signs of favour – the battle of St Quentin, the victory of Lepanto against the enemy of Christendom, the war of Granada . . . These indications arouse great expectations that, since Your Majesty fights for the cause of God, He will fight – as He has always done – for the interests of Your Majesty.

Four years later, when news arrived of the rout and death of Sebastian of Portugal, the king's nephew, Vázquez insisted that soon 'God will return to defend his cause, and grant Your Majesty long life because He sees you as an instrument to defend it; and Your Majesty is well aware that Divine Providence often produces great successes from great challenges and afflictions.'[48] Juan de Ovando, priest, inquisitor, and president of the council of the Indies, felt much the same: when asked whether appointment as president of the council of Finance might fatigue him, he responded, in words that echoed the king's own (page 85 above), 'This can be overcome with the work and health that I have sacrificed in the service of Your Majesty, because it is the same as God's service.' In 1583, the arrival of news of the naval victory at Terceira led Cardinal Granvelle to exclaim that 'God's goodness is giving us so many advantages and favours that we must work hard to further His cause, and strive to liberate as many souls as possible from the chains of the Devil [that is, the Protestants], in the Netherlands as elsewhere – and all the more so, since in doing His work we are also doing our own.'[49]

A remarkable messianic consensus thus linked Philip with the soldiers, artists, musicians and ministers who served him. This inevitably reinforced the king's self-confidence and discouraged the formation of alternative, more flexible strategies. But *were* there alternatives? Philip had inherited territories so far flung that they were, in effect, indefensible: Spain and much of Italy, the Americas and the Netherlands. The addition of the Philippines after 1565 and of the Portuguese empire after 1580 dramatically exacerbated this 'strategic

overstretch'. As Tommaso Campanella, an acute political observer, put it just after the king's death: 'The Spanish Monarchy is founded upon the occult providence of God rather than upon either prudence or opportunism' and he, like many others, saw Spain's history as a heroic progression in which miracles offset disasters as Spain continued its uneven but divinely ordained advance towards world monarchy.[50] And indeed, until the Armada, it seemed as if a spectacular success always counterbalanced each defeat: against the failure of his plan to dethrone Elizabeth in 1570–1, Philip could set the victory of Lepanto (which seemed to end the Turkish threat) and the massacre of St Bartholomew (which appeared to deal Protestantism in France a terminal blow). His losses in the Netherlands, and the unsuccessful war to regain them, were far outweighed by the acquisition of Portugal and its overseas possessions, creating the first empire in history 'on which the sun never set'.

Nevertheless, as Carl von Clausewitz wrote in his nineteenth-century masterpiece *On War*, all wars are waged by individuals, 'the least important of whom may chance to delay things or somehow make them go wrong'. To explain the difficulties encountered by military and naval commanders, Clausewitz borrowed the term 'friction' from physics to cover all the factors that prevent orders being carried out as intended: 'Countless minor incidents – the kind you can never foresee – combine to lower the general level of performance, so that one always falls short of the intended goal.'[51] But Philip's messianic imperialism did not recognize either that human affairs have a tendency to become disorderly or that their random deviations from the predicted pattern require constant correction. Instead, whenever his philosophy of *Suma ratio pro religione* produced unattainable goals and unsustainable strategic overstretch, the king took evasive action: either he wondered how he could 'persuade' God to produce a miracle or he escaped to the worldly delights he had created around his court.

CHAPTER SIX

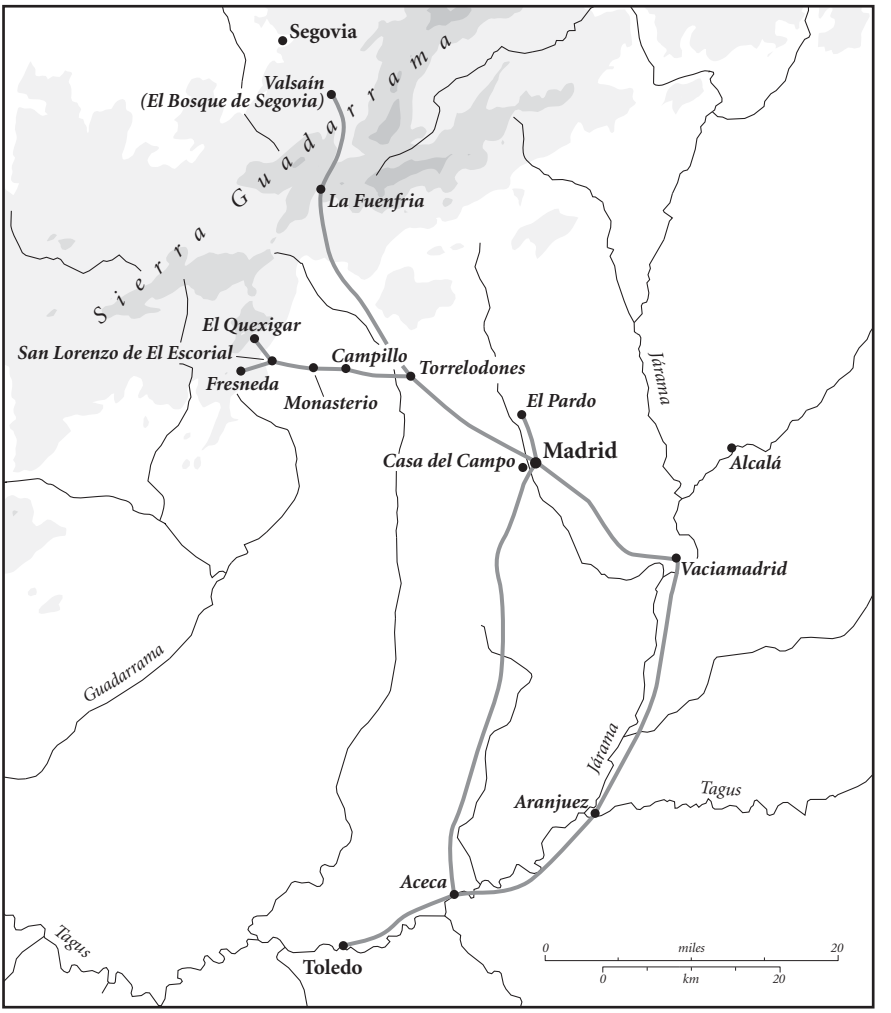
The king at play

Mateo Vázquez's dual position as the king's chaplain and secretary gave him a unique vantage point from which to observe his master's inner feelings and emotions, and he once reminded a colleague that 'kings have pleasures and desires just like other men – but with this difference: they have far more power to pursue them than their subjects and vassals. Moreover, just as many things change every day so do those pleasures and desires.'[1] Philip's undoubted 'power' makes it all the more remarkable that after he returned to Spain in 1559 he pursued the same pleasures and desires with little variation for the rest of his life.

The compulsive traveller

Although Philip made Madrid his permanent administrative capital in 1561, he spent less than half his life there. He resided in his Aragonese lands for several months in 1563–4 and 1585–6, with a shorter visit in 1592; he toured Andalusia in 1570; and in 1580 he left for Portugal and spent three years away from Madrid. Teofilo Ruiz has stressed in *A king travels* that these long, slow royal progresses involved immense preparation and lavish urban spectacles that often left the king exhausted, and that each of them was 'inextricably linked to the exercise and experience of power'.[2] At other times the king travelled informally, moving rapidly between his country houses with a small entourage and sometimes alone as he tried to escape the bustle of his court, because 'tranquillity', according to a Venetian ambassador in 1565, 'is His Majesty's greatest entertainment and relaxation'. 'Being alone pleases him more than anything', the ambassador's successor confirmed in 1571, while the time he spent in his 'country houses brings infinite contentment to his soul'.[3]

Four of the king's country houses could accommodate a considerable entourage: the Pardo (where the king regularly went hunting, especially in



9. Philip's country retreats. Philip built way-stations roughly half way between Madrid and his principal country houses: Aceca on the way to Toledo; Vaciamadrid on the way to Aranjuez; Torrelodones and Fuenfría on the way to E1 Bosque de Segovia.

the autumn), Aranjuez (where he enjoyed the spectacular gardens each spring); El Bosque de Segovia (also known as Valsaín, which had both excellent hunting and fishing, and was relatively cool in summer); and San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial, built to fulfil his vow after the victory of St Quentin in 1557 to erect a major monument in honour of the saint on whose feast day the battle had been fought and won (chapter 3). The complex eventually served as dynastic mausoleum, monastery, seminary and library as well as royal palace, and after 1571 Philip resided there for increasingly long periods.

So predictable did the king's movements between his various residences become that someone at his court (some said his wayward son Don Carlos) composed a little book entitled 'The great and noble travels of King Philip II' with the same itinerary on every page: 'from Madrid to the Escorial, from the Escorial to the Pardo, from the Pardo to Aranjuez, from this royal palace back to the capital'.[4] The jibe overlooked the amount of work the king managed to transact while he travelled. The entry for 3 October 1572 in the journal kept by his secretary Antonio Gracián reveals that, after a few days at the Escorial, 'His Majesty left after lunch and we slept at la Despernada [one of the small way stations]'. The next day, 'A courier arrived at La Despernada with dispatches from Zayas [secretary of state for northern affairs], two from Gaztelu [secretary of the council of the Orders], Antonio Pérez [secretary of state for southern affairs], and Eraso [secretary of the council of the Indies] . . . Tonight His Majesty arrived at the Pardo and sent a courier with replies' to all the dispatches. Philip spent the next two days at the Pardo, where he received and returned dispatches from eight ministers before returning to Madrid.[5]

Creating his network of country houses meant that the king often lived in the middle of building sites – and he did so through choice: in the course of his reign, Philip intervened in more than one hundred architectural projects, reflected in the thousands of orders copied into the eight fat registers of his Ministry of Public Works between 1556 and 1598. Although the king apparently lacked a comprehensive architectural programme for all these projects, in effect he served as his own clerk of works taking an almost endless series of ad hoc decisions that enabled him to keep everything under close personal control.

The lack of a comprehensive programme did not mean a lack of vision. The teaching of his preceptor Honorato Juan, and the careful study of the books by Vitruvius, Serlio and others in his library, each containing splendid illustrations of Italian and Roman buildings, had given the young prince a sound grasp of the principles of architecture; and his travels in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands had introduced him to many distinct architectural styles. All this produced a sublime confidence that he could improve on the plans drawn up by his architects (see plate 20). As soon as he returned to Spain in 1551 he began to issue orders designed to reconfigure the royal palaces of Castile and their gardens 'in the Flemish style', with red-brick walls and black-slate roofs surrounded by neat, verdant gardens, streams and lakes; and after his departure from Flanders in 1559 he ordered Granvelle to send slaters and masons from the Netherlands to create Flemish-style buildings; hydraulic engineers to make artificial streams and lakes like those of the Netherlands; and gardeners to tend the plants also brought from the Low Countries.

While still in the Netherlands, the king took another major decision essential to the creation of a uniform 'Philip II style'. In 1559 he invited Juan Bautista

de Toledo, who had worked with Michelangelo on St Peter's basilica in Rome, to join him in Spain; two years later he declared that 'from now on, and for the rest of your life, you will be our architect'. The position was new. Philip's predecessors had appointed an individual master of works for each project: henceforth everyone answered to Toledo. The king ordered him to reside at court and 'make the plans and models that we ask of you for all our works, buildings, and other tasks related to the said office of architect' and, to this end, Toledo created a special 'study' in the Madrid Alcázar where he trained a team of draughtsmen to prepare technical drawings. But the king did not entirely trust Toledo: he made frequent visits to monitor progress. For example, when he returned to Castile in May 1564 after several months in Aragon, Philip did 'not spend even two days in the same place, instead going with a very small entourage to visit all his palaces around [Madrid] one after the other.'[6]

Unfortunately for his initiative, the king also appointed Toledo to several additional positions – master of works at the Escorial, Aranjuez, El Pardo and the Madrid Alcázar – and ordered him to prepare technical drawings for these and other projects. Inevitably, Toledo fell behind with his tasks. In 1565 Philip opined that 'he neglects them out of pure idleness, weakness, and slothfulness, and not out of malice, because when he wants to do something, he knows just how to do it'; but, he added testily, 'if he does not get on with it, it will not be possible to let him work on so many things'.[7] As Toledo fell further behind, the king's frustration mounted. 'This is no good at all!' he exploded. 'It is no less than an insult that instead of finishing the work, as I had expected and ordered . . . so far he has not even done the half of it.' The architect remained unperturbed. 'Buildings are like plants,' he crooned: 'They only grow if they are watered, and the water they need is money.' This appeased the king somewhat. 'This is fine philosophy about the lack of money,' he commented grudgingly as he released more funds.[8]

The disagreements continued until Toledo's death in 1567, when Philip made an extraordinary decision: he left vacant the posts of royal architect and of master of works at all the various projects. Instead, he made use of a man with impressive skills as a technical draughtsman but virtually no experience as an architect: Juan de Herrera. In 1563 Philip had appointed Herrera to assist Toledo, and together they prepared plans for work at the *alcázares* of Madrid, Toledo and Segovia, the Alhambra of Granada, and the Escorial, the boldest and most ambitious expression of the 'Philip II style' – and also the only one that survives intact.

The 'eighth wonder of the world'

At first, the king thought of fulfilling his vow to honour St Lawrence by expanding one of the existing royal convents run by the Jeronimites, the

'praying order' in whose house at Yuste his father had found solace. Charles had specified in his testament that he must be buried beside his wife in the royal chapel in Granada, and although a subsequent codicil allowed his son to choose an alternative resting place, so long as it was beside the empress, upon hearing of their father's death Philip ordered his regent, Juana, to send their father's corpse to Granada. Probably due to lack of money, Juana failed to do this, and just before leaving the Netherlands Philip ordered her to leave Charles's remains at Yuste, so that he could personally supervise their re-burial 'with the authority and respect that we desire' after his return to Spain. It seems that Philip had already decided on an important change to his plan to honour St Lawrence: the creation of a mausoleum for his family.[9]

Philip spent eighteen months compiling a shortlist of appropriate sites for the last resting place of his father (and other deceased members of the royal family) in a new convent, to be called 'St Lawrence of Victory', and in April 1561 he advised the general of the Jeronimite Order that 'I intend to return soon to see the sites that I have already visited and discussed, to decide in which of them to start building'. The king made his decision two months later: he would build 'his' Jeronimite monastery in the foothills of the Sierra de Guadarrama near the village of El Escorial, some thirty miles north-west of Madrid – far enough away from the capital to ensure it would remain a place of retreat. He asked the general for approval and the latter suggested only one change: instead of 'St Lawrence of Victory' the new foundation should be called 'Royal St Lawrence'. The king agreed.[10]

In 1562 Philip visited the site twice, accompanied by Toledo, who 'had already devised the plan of the principal parts of the edifice': a single structure arranged around twelve patios, perhaps in imitation of the gridiron on which St Lawrence had been martyred. Despite the king's numerous disputes with both his architect and the leaders of the new monastic community, this design prevailed, giving a distinctive form to one of the largest edifices of its day: a single quadrilateral complex 740 feet by 560 feet (207.20 metres by 156.80 metres), with a modest royal apartment close to the basilica, and surrounded by a walled compound of gardens and fields that eventually measured thirty square miles. Toledo began to supervise the clearing and levelling of the site and on 20 August 1563, a day determined to be astrologically propitious, Philip watched as the first stone of the basilica was laid.

According to Fray Antonio de Villacastín, the monk who oversaw the day-to-day construction, 'Ever since that day, the work advanced at a furious pace as ordered by King Philip'; but the 'fury' soon dissipated because Philip introduced two major changes: adding a seminary to train priests and increasing the monastic community from fifty to one hundred monks. These changes required the construction of an entire additional storey. To make sure that this and other

subsequent changes were implemented, Philip gave one of his secretaries 'the plans of the monastery, in final form', with instructions to 'make sure that Juan Bautista [de Toledo] makes copies of them, together with the written annotations, without changing a thing; and he must make multiple copies, because we need three for each floor: one set for the monks, the other for Juan Bautista, and the third set for me. Make sure he makes them this week.'[11] The king's insistence on micromanagement caused serious delays and immense cost overruns. In 1569, Philip issued a sharply worded Instruction that forbade the building contractors to make any change to the plans without his express consent ('We order that you consult us before each change') and even removed their freedom to hire site labour: instead, usually working through Juan de Herrera, the king negotiated contracts directly with specialists in the various types of construction required, and then provided them with a copy of the agreed plan as well as specifications down to the sixteenth part of a foot. This unusual system of construction created an assembly line of workers, all following the same protocols, so that Philip could control every aspect of the building process – which explains the visual uniformity that is the most striking feature of the Escorial.[12]

In 1576, such a 'great dispute' developed between the monks and the building contractors that Philip decided to pay a special visit 'to see it all for himself. To resolve the matter, he first visited the stone quarries to see how they handled the blocks', and then he returned

> to inspect the work on the basilica, observing and assessing how the finished blocks and those still to be finished were handled, and assessing also the time spent on each. He decided it was better and advantageous to bring the blocks from the quarry already finished, because His Majesty worked out that it would save time and money.

After that, according to Villacastín, 'eighteen cranes were all simultaneously at work, at a cost of 10,000 ducats a month just for the wages of the supervisors and workmen working on the basilica', until in 1584 the king wept openly as he attended its consecration (see plate 21).[13] Thanks to the king's personal intervention, as Catherine Wilkinson Zerner observed, although 'many teams of workmen were employed on the building, yet it is impossible to distinguish any differences in handling. The almost perfect uniformity of the technical execution of the Escorial is an amazing accomplishment.'[14]

Meanwhile, the monastic community came to life. In 1571, the Jeronimites sang Mass for the first time in the new church, with the king watching from a window in his apartment that overlooked the altar. Shortly afterwards, novices from Madrid and monks from the Jeronimite house at Guadalupe arrived

'in perfect order, two by two, led by two mounted guides'. There followed 'a sung Mass; and this afternoon, solemn vespers in honour of St Lawrence. His Majesty attended everything.' 'You can well imagine', wrote a royal minister, 'how happy His Majesty must feel to see everything already in this state.'[15]

Philip also arranged for the transfer of the bodies of eleven of his relatives from resting places all over Spain to be reburied at the Escorial, and he devoted much thought to erecting suitable funeral effigies in the new basilica. In 1572, he approved a plan for two groups of larger-than-life statues kneeling on either side of the main altar as if they had joined the monks in perpetual prayer, and work began on a group of seven figures in the cenotaph of Charles, including his two sons who had died as infants. Philip probably intended to include his sisters Juana and María in his own family group, but (perhaps in the interests of getting the job done) he reduced each one to just five figures. Just before he died in 1598 he admired the stunning gilded and jewelled bronze statues of his parents and three of his aunts cast by Pompeo Leone and his workshop, and approved the plaster casts of himself and his family (solemnly installed in 1600: see plate 22). As Rosemarie Mulcahy observed, 'They are arguably the most impressive royal funerary sculpture in European art.'[16]

The pharaonic splendour of the Escorial impressed everyone. In 1593 John Eliot, an English visitor, thought it 'the most magnificent palace in all Europe' and 'the most beautiful building I have seen in my whole life'. Thirty years later, the Welsh traveller James Howell 'was yesterday at the Escorial to see the Monastery of Saint Laurence, the eighth wonder of the world', where he admired 'the site of the place, the state of the thing, and the symmetry of the structure'. Having considered what might have 'moved King Philip to waste so much treasure', Howell reported that 'there be a hundred monks, and every one hath his man [*sc.* servant] and his mule, and a multitude of officers; besides there are three libraries there, full of the choicest books for all sciences . . . To take a view of every room in the house, one must make account to go ten miles.' It was, he concluded, 'a world of glorious things that purely ravished me. By this mighty monument, it may be inferred that Philip the Second, though he was a little man, yet had he vast, gigantic thoughts in him to leave such a huge pile for posterity to gaze upon and admire his memory.'[17]

The cost of realizing the king's 'vast, gigantic thoughts' at the Escorial was stunning. Looking back, Villacastín estimated that over the thirty-five years of construction, the king had spent 6.5 million ducats: more than the entire revenue of Castile for one year. Jehan Lhermite, the royal valet to whom Villacastín provided this detailed estimate, noted that 'popular opinion holds this valuation to be somewhat short, and certainly different methods have been used to make estimates' so that 'some say it cost 14 million'. Lhermite himself thought that 'taking everything into account, and taking it as a whole, the cost may have risen

to 9 or 10 million' – and promptly added 'I have heard that His Majesty himself does not want anyone to know for sure the precise expenditure.'[18]

In their estimates of the 'precise expenditure' of constructing such a vast edifice in such a short time, Howell, Villacastín and Lhermite all forgot the 'opportunity costs': the hours that Philip spent on the project instead of on other matters. Consider his response to a letter from the prior of San Lorenzo in November 1571: after stating the need for another preacher, and requesting that the king resolve an architectural dilemma in the sacristy, the prior announced that 'today we expelled one of the novices who came from the convent of St Bartholomew because . . .' The half-line of text giving the reason for the 'expulsion' has been neatly excised with scissors. Just in case the secretary charged with responding to the prior should think this odd, the king wrote in the margin: 'This is fine: I cut out the rest.'[19] Presumably the novice – one of those whose arrival had so stirred the king's heart on St Lawrence's Day a few months earlier – had been caught committing some serious offence, such as sodomy, and the king wanted to erase all mention of it in order to avoid polluting both the file and the enterprise (see plate 23).

The document which the king cut (a dramatic and apparently unique step) was just one of thousands of letters concerning the monastery that reached his desk, and almost all required a royal decision. In addition, contrary to his normal practice of transacting all business in writing, the king made many decisions concerning San Lorenzo only after a personal visit that involved extensive consultation with those carrying out his orders. Thus in June 1575 one of the monks noted that the king came to 'his convent' because 'he still had many important matters to resolve' – but by this he did not mean winning the war in the Netherlands, defending the Mediterranean or anticipating the impact of the Decree of Bankruptcy (the things that most of his contemporaries would have rated as the 'important matters' in 1575) – but rather arguments with the prior, Villacastín and the contractors, who 'decided nothing without the approval of His Majesty'.[20] Where the Escorial was concerned, the king neglected nothing. To decide which design would be best for the stalls in the choir, the king paid for a 'model of the stalls' to be brought all the way to Badajoz, where he then resided, so he could personally inspect and approve the design (1580). He even spent time deciding where the toilets should be situated: 'I wonder whether bad smells from the toilets will emanate from these holes: to help me make up my mind about this, I would like to see the plan of the water conduits,' the king wrote. Nor did Philip consider only the royal apartments: 'Let these toilets be constructed so that they do not cause the quarters of the kitchen staff to smell.'[21] One wonders how many other rulers of the day found time to worry whether the kitchen staff would be able to smell excrement.

The royal gardener

Philip spent almost as much time on the creation of his gardens as on building his palaces and, indeed, one of the Jeronimites at the Escorial suspected that the king tried to ensure that buildings and gardens proceeded at the same pace. Philip's characteristic holograph rescript on a letter from his minister of public works – one of hundreds that survive – reveals not only his passionate interest in birds and gardens but also the same excitement and enthusiasm for 'anything outdoors' that he had displayed as a boy (chapter 1).

> Find out how the pheasants are doing at the Casa de Campo and if anything more is needed for them, and if it would be better to let them all free at once, or only some of them, or whether we should keep them cooped up. Let me know about this, and tell me whether they have started building any of the walls at the Pardo, and how work there is getting on. And write to Aranjuez and ask them about the buildings there and about the hedges, and whether they can hear the pheasants there . . .

Here, too, he wanted to imitate what he had seen in his travels outside Spain. He sent gardeners as well as architects to northern Europe for inspiration, and when his chief gardener died Philip made haste to secure the 'plans and paintings of the orchards and fountains, and of the gardens in France, England and the Netherlands and elsewhere, and the other things that I made him do'.[22]

Not everything came from abroad. In 1561, Philip told his minister of public works: 'I want some myrtles to be brought immediately from Valencia to be planted here this year, and also some trees that are said to grow there called locust trees, which are very beautiful'. The minister must not only arrange for their delivery but also hire an experienced gardener to plant them, and 'find out where we can find orange trees for the Pardo'.[23] The king bought in bulk, so that by the time of his death the gardens in Aranjuez boasted almost 223,000 trees, all of them planted under his personal supervision. According to Catherine Wilkinson Zerner, 'Aranjuez was the largest domesticated landscape before Versailles, and its design was unique.'[24]

Philip was a keen fisherman, in both rivers and ponds, and he normally took steps to ensure he would get a good catch. First, he eliminated all competition with draconian legislation: anyone caught fishing in the royal ponds would receive one hundred lashes for the first offence and would be sent to the galleys for the second. Then he cheated. One day in 1566 he gave orders that 'in case I am free to go to the Pardo . . . lower the water level in the small pond tonight so that it will already be lower tomorrow and I can fish there if I want'. A few years later, he adopted the same technique when he and some of his

courtiers wanted 'to fish in the large pond at la Fresneda', near the Escorial: one of his engineers 'lowered the water in the pond' and 'they caught many fish'.[25] Against such an unscrupulous and determined angler, the royal fish had no chance.

More exotically, Philip created two zoos. One at the Casa de Campo boasted elephants, rhinoceros and lions – but security proved less than perfect: in 1563 a lioness escaped and almost mauled a courtier to death while the royal family looked on helplessly from their coach. The smaller royal zoo at Aranjuez started with four camels, brought to the palace from Africa. Since they proved useful as beasts of burden on construction sites, they were encouraged to breed and by 1600 there were about forty of them. In 1584 the king added ostriches from Africa and, to avoid making a mistake in the design of the Ostrich House, he ordered two different designs: 'one suitable just for ostriches, which will cost 500 ducats, and the other also suitable for other sorts of birds, costing 3,000 ducats'. Philip chose the cheaper one, but this proved to be a false economy: one day a 'wild ostrich' escaped and attacked a gardener, injuring him so severely that he was off work for several weeks.[26]

Patron of arts and sciences

Philip was an avid collector of artistic treasures. By the time of his death he owned a hoard of over 5,000 coins and medals, all in special cabinets; he possessed jewels and works of art in silver and gold; he had 137 astrolabes and watches; he accumulated musical instruments, trinkets, precious stones and 113 statues of famous people in bronze and marble. The size of these collections, like his 7,422 relics (chapter 5), suggests an obsession with acquiring *things*; but Philip had a genuine and almost inexhaustible curiosity. Thus in 1583 he made a special visit to Segovia 'to see that excellent machine for minting coins, invented by the Archduke of Austria' just installed there. Four years later, when Jehan Lhermite arrived from Antwerp with a pair of skates, the king arranged for a skating display on the frozen lake at the Casa de Campo and took his children out in a warm coach to watch. Afterwards he summoned the new arrival to approach 'because he wanted to examine close up one of my skates, which I showed him'. Since the ice continued for three more weeks, the royal party turned out several times to watch Lhermite execute 'three or four audacious pirouettes on the middle of the ice'.[27]

The king employed another Fleming, Francis Holbeek, 'who was in charge of distilling perfumed water' at the palace of Aranjuez, to create a botanical garden from which to produce 'quintessences' capable of curing human ailments, according to the teachings attributed to Ramon Llull (Philip systematically collected copies of Llull's works for the Escorial library). The project was in full swing by 1569 when Francisco Franco, professor of medicine at the

university of Seville, praised the king for sending 'a diligent herbalist throughout Andalusia with a catalogue of herbs, searching for specimens of each one to take to Aranjuez', where 'His Majesty created large gardens for all sorts of plants with medicinal properties'.[28] The next year Philip extended his search, ordering Francisco Hernández, his *protomédico* (chief health official), to sail to America and seek out plants for medicinal uses. Over the next seven years Hernández recorded some 3,000 flora, of which more than 800 were carefully pressed and sent back to the king to be bound into volumes, together with drawings and a commentary.

Philip had an ulterior motive for creating these medical herb gardens and collecting American flora. In 1585 work began at the Escorial on constructing a complex of 'seven or eight rooms' with special chimneys and furnaces to serve as a laboratory 'where you could see strange ways of distilling and new types of stills, some of metal and others of glass, in which they carried out a thousand tests'. Some 400 glass stills arrived in 1588 (with another hundred in case of breakages), many of them linked to the brass 'philosopher's tower', almost seven metres high, capable of producing up to ninety kilograms of 'quintessences' per day (see plate 24).[29]

Philip was curious about many other aspects of the natural world. When in 1562 the construction of the Pardo palace was held up for lack of water, he accepted the services of a diviner (*zahorí*): a Morisco 'boy of about eight' who claimed he could detect water 'beneath the ground, whether it was deep or just beneath the surface, but that he could only "see" on days of bright sun'. Philip instructed the boy to put his skills to work 'on the first day with bright sun' – and decided to go and watch him: 'I would like you to bring the boy who divines today, because it seems it will be sunny.' When the boy's prediction led to the discovery of water twenty-four feet beneath the surface, Philip sent him to work at the Escorial.[30]

The king also encouraged other forms of scientific learning that today enjoy higher repute. Printing presses in several Spanish cities published 74 editions and 57 reprints of scientific treatises between 1561 and 1610 (compared with 65 and 40, respectively, between 1521 and 1560). Some works, like José de Acosta's *Natural and moral history of the Indies*, first printed in Latin at Salamanca in 1589, achieved great commercial success both in Spain and abroad, but most publications depended on a royal subsidy. It is hard to see how any printer could have afforded to publish Pedro Ambrosio Ondériz's handsomely illustrated translation of Books XI and XII of Euclid's *Elements of Geometry* in 1585 without a royal subvention of 700 ducats; while a royal gift of 300 ducats proved crucial in allowing Don Diego de Zúñiga to publish in 1584 his *Commentaries on the Book of Job* in Latin, the only unequivocal endorsement of Copernicus's heliocentric view to appear in early modern Spain.[31]

Philip also subsidized many non-scientific writers, especially those who lionized his own family – the poet Juan Rufo received a subsidy of 500 ducats towards the cost of publishing his *Austriada,* an epic poem about Don John of Austria – and those who dedicated their work to him, but the largest payments went to those who worked on religious projects of which he approved. Above all, he provided the Plantin Press of Antwerp with over 10,000 ducats towards the cost of printing the eight-volume *Biblia regia* (see plates 15 and 16) and he paid for the publication in Rome of the three-volume in-folio *Explanations of Ezekiel and of the city and temple of Jerusalem*. In 1590 the king granted an audience to the two authors of this ambitious work, full of lavish engravings that showed how Solomon's Temple might have looked, and after insisting on some design changes he granted them 8,000 ducats for the engraving and printing of 2,000 copies (although he saw this as an advance on future sales, believing that 'my treasury will recoup whatever we spend now on this venture').[32]

Philip's curiosity led him to initiate several projects designed to improve his knowledge of the kingdoms over which he ruled. Shortly before he returned to Spain in 1559, Philip commissioned the Flemish cartographer Jacob van Deventer 'to visit, measure and draw all the towns of these [Netherlands] provinces, with the rivers and villages adjoining, likewise the frontier crossings and passes. The whole work is to be made into a book containing a panorama of each province, followed by a representation of each individual town.'[33] By the time van Deventer died in 1575, he had completed over 250 bird's-eye plans. His survey constitutes a unique cartographic achievement: no other region in the sixteenth century can boast a series of town plans of similar accuracy, uniformity and precision. While van Deventer toiled in the Netherlands, Philip invited another Flemish cartographer, Anton van den Wyngaerde (Antonio de las Viñas), to undertake a similar survey of Spanish towns. Wyngaerde's technique was somewhat different, for he worked from a slight elevation and in panoramic format, rather than from bird's-eye perspective; but the record was just as impressive. Finished views of fifty-six Spanish cities by Wyngaerde exist, together with preparatory sketches for several more.

To set beside these urban images in 1566 Philip commissioned the necessary surveys to create a map of the Iberian Peninsula on an unprecedented scale. A team of experts led first by Pedro de Esquivel, professor of mathematics at the Complutense University, and then by Juan López de Velasco, 'royal cosmographer', worked on the project; and although it was never published, the team produced an atlas containing an overall map of the peninsula, together with twenty detailed regional maps on a scale of 1:430,000, similar to that of standard aeronautical charts today and by far the largest European maps of their day to be based on a detailed ground survey.

Philip also commissioned a series of questionnaires, later known as the *Relaciones topográficas*, sent out in the 1570s to every settlement in Castile requiring information about its geography, history, economy, population and 'antiquities' as a prelude to writing a detailed 'description and history' of the kingdom. The king added a letter explaining that he needed each community to complete the questionnaire 'because if we were to send a person to compile the necessary information, it could not be accomplished with the speed that we would like to see in this venture'.[34] López de Velasco initiated a similar operation in America. He sent out questionnaires in the king's name to communities in both New Spain and Peru, asking who had discovered and colonized each location. What was its climate, landscape and population (and how had it changed over time and why)? Which native peoples lived there, how did they live and what did they eat? What buildings, secular and ecclesiastical, existed? López de Velasco also asked for maps – although here he miscalculated, because many colonial communities lacked a Spanish cartographer and so sent back a map drawn by an indigenous artist who used the traditional conventions.

The king sent all the results of these various projects to the Escorial in the hope that, on top of its other functions, it would become a research centre. His foundation charter of 1567 envisaged a college for twenty-four students in theology and arts, and a seminary for thirty ordinands. In addition, 'I have given orders to collect a good number of books' in the monastic library, he explained as he asked one of his ambassadors to purchase certain volumes, because 'it is one of the principal source of memories that we can leave, both for the special benefit of the monks who will live in this convent and for all the scholars who will come here and read them'.[35] By the time of his death, the monastery library contained 14,000 volumes (including those acquired by Calvete de Estrella).

Philip created a research centre in Madrid, too. On Christmas Day 1582, 'desiring the benefit of our vassals, and that our kingdoms should possess some experts proficient in mathematics, architecture and related forms of knowledge', Philip appointed three founding professors to a new academy of mathematics in the capital. One of them, Juan Bautista Lavaña, a Portuguese cartographer, would receive 400 ducats a year 'to work and study in our court, where he will take charge of cosmography, geography and topography, and read mathematics'. All three scholars reported directly to Juan de Herrera, who signed a certificate confirming that they had performed their work satisfactorily and so could collect their generous salary – considerably more than that of any university professor. This was deliberate. In 1584 Herrera published his Instructions for the new academy, which stressed two points: its exalted clientele and its elitist philosophy. The professors must give public lectures in Castilian (not Latin) each morning in the patio of the Alcázar primarily

> so that the nobles in the palace and court of His Majesty should be instructed in courtly speech and manners so that, by the time they leave for the wars or for an administrative posting, they will have a laudable and virtuous career on which to spend their time rather than fall, for lack of conversational skills and enthusiasm, into pointless pursuits and the faults that grow from youthful idleness.

In short, the academy aimed to groom administrators fit for the king's service.[36]

A day in the life

These myriad interests, combined with his amazing dedication to work and prayer, must lead any reader to wonder how Philip managed to accomplish so much. Like all humans, his days contained only twenty-four hours and his weeks only seven days, and whether he resided in Madrid, Lisbon or in one of his country houses he followed much the same routine. He normally slept alone until 8 a.m. – and did not rise before then: 'See to it that until eight o'clock there is no hammering or great noise,' he told his minister of works one evening. After his barbers had shaved him and his gentlemen of the bedchamber had dressed him, the king began work by signing the papers prepared by his secretaries the previous day. 'I am now signing what has arrived, because that always comes first,' he once observed. This activity could consume much time: one morning he complained that among his various accomplishments 'the least has been to sign almost four hundred letters'.[37] Next, the king went to 'hear Mass and explain his affairs to God'. According to Fray Pablo de Mendoza, who in 1583 proposed a detailed daily schedule for the king, 'in this you might spend an hour and a half'.[38] After that, Philip either gave audiences (when in Madrid) or worked on his papers until 11 a.m., when he ate the first of his two daily meals, usually alone. Then he took a siesta while his ministers worked, and then began the main work of the day, with valets bringing to the king's desk a stream of consultas from his councils, and also the memorials and letters 'to be placed in the king's hands', for Philip to read and then write his decision. We know the king was right-handed because whenever arthritis afflicted his right hand or wrist he complained that he could not sign anything; we also know that his weakening eyesight sometimes reduced his ability to work by candlelight. He frequently complained about this: 'It is already late and at this hour my eyes are in such a state that I can hardly see'; or 'I have neither time nor eyesight, which is very poor at night'; or 'I am writing with my eyes half shut'.[39]

By 1580, the use of a stamp with his signature circumvented the weakness in his wrist, and his sight received unexpected relief from England, which boasted an active lens-crafting industry. Secretary of State Gabriel de Zayas

begged a Spanish merchant living in London to send him a pair of spectacles because 'although I (praise God) do not need them, I would like to help the duke of Alba and other colleagues who use them'. Before long, Philip himself was wearing reading glasses to work – although he refrained from doing so in public: 'My sight is not as good as it used to be for reading in a coach,' he admitted in 1586, but 'I am ashamed to wear glasses outside'.[40]

Better clocks formed another artificial aid to efficiency. Lhermite provided a detailed description of the two clocks that 'His Majesty normally used in his apartment'. One came equipped with chimes, and both with oil lamps so that they acted 'like night lights instead of candles' and 'His Majesty made use of no other light than that of these two lamps when he needed to read his papers'. They 'gave an unusual and powerful impression,' Lhermite continued:

> One might say that there was no other object or item of furniture that the king valued more, or that he liked more, or that he got more use from than these two machines, which he kept before his eyes day and night. In summary, we could say they completely controlled the life of the good king, because they regulated and measured his life, dividing it by the minute, determining his daily actions and occupations [see plate 25].[41]

When the weather was fine, Philip sometimes escaped the tyranny of his clocks – although seldom his paperwork: 'So far I have been unable to finish with these devils, my papers, and I still have some left to read tonight, even though I am taking some with me to read in the country, which is where I am going right now,' he announced to his secretary one day in spring 1577.[42] Occasionally he dropped everything in order to relax outdoors. In the first years of his reign, in the Netherlands, he hunted birds in Brussels ('we used dark lanterns to drive the magpies into nets, and before night fell we had killed fourteen of them') and he hunted game in the palace of his aunt Mary at Binche ('which is a great place for it, and also for the benefit brought by exercise and the open air to my health').[43] After his return to Spain, Philip continued for some years to take part in jousts and tournaments, and even in his fifties he still travelled and hunted on horseback. His ministers sometimes felt resentment when their master relaxed. For example, at El Bosque de Segovia in 1576, Mateo Vázquez included an implicit reproach in a note about the matters that had arisen 'since Your Majesty left to go fishing'; but Philip paid no attention. He later informed Vázquez that 'because I have arranged to go on an outing with the queen, I won't need you today'.[44]

The king enjoyed watching spectacles, especially with his family. In 1584, at the Escorial for Corpus Christi, Philip and his children spent three hours watching 'a play about the conversion of St Pelagia', and a decade later, in Madrid

just before Lent, they watched two Italian acrobats on a high wire stretched in front of the Alcázar, dancing and performing in time to music 'making everyone laugh'. The king also enjoyed bullfights, for example attending the five days of corridas held in Lisbon in 1582 to celebrate the defeat of a French attack on the Azores, and describing the finer points in a letter to his daughters.[45] In 1586 he looked forward to attending an auto-de-fé in Toledo, explaining to his secretary that 'It's really something if you have not seen one before'; and although he was disappointed on this occasion, he was lucky five years later when he visited the city and took his children to watch the spectacle. His only regret, he wrote to his daughter Catalina in distant Turin, was that 'you have never seen one'.[46]

Indoors, Philip's principal source of relaxation since he was a boy seems to have been jesters, buffoons and dwarves. Apart from Perejón (chapter 1), the best known is Magdalena Ruiz, who entered royal service in 1568 and died at the Escorial in 1605. Magdalena had epileptic seizures, got drunk, and over-ate (especially strawberries) until she was sick. Whenever she appeared in public the crowd chanted 'Whip her, whip her', hoping to provoke or frighten her. The king took her with him to Portugal and filled the letters he wrote to his daughters with accounts of her deeds and defects. 'Magdalena is very angry with me,' he told them in 1581, 'and says she wants to leave and that we are trying to kill her; but tomorrow I think she will have forgotten all about it.' She could be rude as well as angry: after taking a short trip in 1584, Philip reported that 'I rode out on horseback but returned in my carriage, and because I did not ride back, Magdalena told me that I wanted to go back to being a baby'.[47] The frequency with which Magdalena appears in the king's letters to his children suggests that he saw her every day.

Once reunited with his paperwork, Philip normally worked until 9 p.m., when he ate dinner (almost always alone) – although he usually took a short stroll first. One day in 1578, he confessed (in writing, naturally) to Vázquez 'I have been very careless today' because his valets had brought him two files and 'I put them on a desk where I had other papers, so that I could see them later, but because I had many audiences, and the rest of the files that I gave you, and lots of other papers that I signed earlier, I forgot about them – so that even though we spoke this evening . . . I did not remember them until now, when it is already nine o'clock'. But then the king had a stroke of luck: 'Having just asked for dinner [to be served], while taking a stroll, and walking near the desk, I happened to see them and read them.' When dealing with matters that he felt could not wait, the king might delay his dinner for an hour or more. 'It's ten o'clock and I have not dined or lifted my head all day,' he complained to Vázquez in 1588 as he wrestled with Armada business, 'as you will see by the size of the file' he was returning; but 'now I have neither eyes nor concentration' and so 'send the rest back to me tomorrow'.[48]

His meals, when they came, were abundant but monotonous. Every day at lunch and dinner Philip could choose from fried or roast chicken; a partridge or a piece of game; a side of venison or beef (normally about two kilos). Soup and white bread came with every meal, plus fruit with lunch and salad with dinner; but, according to his household account books, the king rarely ate fruit or vegetables. Until 1585, he ate fish every Friday but in that year he obtained express permission from the pope to eat meat every day, even during Lent, because 'We do not want to risk a change to our diet'. Henceforth, he gave up meat only on Good Friday.[49]

After dinner, the king continued to work on his papers until about 11 p.m., but seldom later. One day in 1572, at the Escorial, Antonio Gracián received a letter from Madrid 'and I was urged to deliver it to His Majesty before he went to bed. I sent it immediately, but it was almost 11 o'clock and His Majesty had already retired and so it could not be delivered.' A decade later Philip upbraided Mateo Vázquez for sending him dossiers at bedtime: 'I was already in bed last night when this came and, as you know, my doctors do not wish me to see any papers after I have eaten dinner.' Sometimes, as the king looked back on his day, it seemed as if he had done nothing but push papers: one evening at the Escorial, he complained to his daughters (in Madrid) that 'I have spent the whole day reading and writing' and so 'I am writing this after 10 o'clock, very tired and very hungry'.[50]

Only the combination of his many virtues – his ability to work long and hard days, his intelligence and his memory, his exercise regime and his moderation in all things – can explain Philip's ability to take so many decisions on so many different matters throughout the fifty-five years that he governed. Nevertheless, this prowess disguised a surprising indiscipline in what he chose to concentrate on. Thus he read and commented on countless papers concerning the Escorial and ecclesiastical patronage, however trivial, whereas many documents on issues of national security contain few signs of royal interest – just as Don Diego de Córdoba, Don Juan de Silva and others complained (chapter 4). The king was not unaware of this problem. In March 1566, with war in the Mediterranean, a rebellion narrowly averted in Mexico and trouble brewing in the Netherlands, Secretary Pedro de Hoyo apologized for troubling his master with 'trivia' about the royal palaces: 'When I see Your Majesty with many tasks, I am sometimes afraid to worry you with matters that could be postponed without detriment.' The king replied 'I gave up on the tasks: although there are plenty of them these days, sometimes a man can relax by doing other things.'[51] Everyone who has wielded executive power can sympathize with this statement: in a time of crisis, solving minor problems can provide short-term satisfaction, even relaxation, which seems to make the major problems less daunting. But Córdoba, Silva and the rest felt that Philip

did not 'relax' by 'doing other things' just 'sometimes': they complained that he did so constantly, so that 'relaxation' became escapism.

Sex in the palace?

A few others have suggested that the king's 'relaxation' included illicit sexual relations. In his 1997 biography, *Philip of Spain*, Henry Kamen asserted that Philip's 'fondness for women was evident (he was scrupulously faithful to only [his fourth wife], Anna)'. Specifically, 'When Philip went to the Netherlands in 1555 he immediately had love affairs with at least two ladies'; and 'despite his marriage' to Isabel of France, 'Philip continued to divert his sexual energies elsewhere'. 'He may have had other lovers,' Kamen added mysteriously, 'but they are not documented.'[52] It seems that only one lady left direct testimony concerning the king's infidelity. According to the confessor and eulogist of Lady Magdalen Dacre, some time in 1554 or 1555,

> [w]hiles she lived a mayd of honour in the court, on a tyme King Philip who had maryed Queene Mary, youthfully opened a window where she was washing her face, and sportingly putting in his arme, which some other would perhaps haue taken as a great honour and reioyced thereat . . . she tooks a staffe lying by, and strongly stroke the King on the arme.

The confessor, who included this incident in a chapter entitled 'Of her notable chastity', had no doubt that Philip had some 'lewdnes' on his mind, and rejoiced that Lady Dacre had 'rejected the King'; and it is indeed hard to see why else a married monarch would have 'youthfully opened a window' explicitly to grope one of his wife's maids while she washed herself.[53] All other stories of Philip's affairs are based on indirect evidence, however, and most concern only two ladies. The first alleged affair, with Isabel Osorio, seems plausible (chapter 1); the second, with Doña Eufrasia de Guzmán, does not. To be sure, in 1565 Venetian ambassador Giovanni Soranzo claimed that Philip had sired a child, the prince of Asculi, by Doña Eufrasia (like Osorio, a lady-in-waiting to Princess Juana); but Soranzo was apparently the only ambassador to mention this, and he did so only after returning to Venice, not in his dispatches written while in Spain. A comment by Ruy Gómez, whose household office obliged him to sleep in the king's bedchamber, indirectly refuted Soranzo. In October 1564 he provided the French ambassador with 'some details of the king's former love affairs, which had now ceased, and had been outside the palace, so that everything was now going so well with the queen [Isabel of France] that one could not wish for more'. In reporting this indiscretion to King Charles IX, the ambassador made no mention of Doña Eufrasia or anyone else – and since the queen

was Charles's sister, had there been any suggestion of adultery he would certainly have mentioned it, as well as any illegitimate child sired by the king.[54]

Nevertheless, speculation continued. In 1578 the Spanish ambassador in Rome, Don Juan de Zúñiga reported on 'a rumour that has recently spread far and wide: that Your Majesty has a bastard son' (presumably Asculi) and was about to confer on him lands of the Military Orders, for which the pope would need to give his consent. Therefore, Zúñiga continued, 'if there is a son, it would be wise to request in advance a papal dispensation for the lands that Your Majesty might wish him to have, even though he is not legitimate'. What makes this letter so extraordinary is that Zúñiga, who had known Philip 'since he was a child' (as he stated later in the same letter), should apparently show no surprise that 'Your Majesty might have such a son'.[55] A few years later, also in Rome, a cardinal asked his agent in Madrid whether Philip had an illegitimate daughter. After careful enquiry, the agent replied that 'As yet, I have not heard a word about any natural daughter of His Majesty'; and although 'I have heard that a couple of princes have some claim to be his sons', he did not believe it 'because His Majesty has not given any sign of recognizing them as such'.[56] Nevertheless, others remained credulous. When William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth's chief adviser (and formerly a minister of Philip and Mary), read a list of the gentlemen adventurers mustered aboard the Spanish Armada in May 1588, he found the name of 'the prince of Asculi' and annotated it: 'The king of Spayne's bastard'. Likewise, ten years later an English manuscript prepared for Elizabeth's Favourite, the earl of Essex, and entitled *Anatomie of Spayne* devoted a page to Philip's 'yncestuous adulterie' with Doña Eufrasia.[57] Why would otherwise sensible statesmen like Burghley and Essex fabricate an almost certainly false adulterous sex life for Philip? The answer lies in the king's aggressive foreign policy in northern Europe, which led his enemies to use every artifice at their disposal to undermine him.

PART III

THE FIRST DECADE OF THE REIGN

CHAPTER SEVEN

Getting a grip, 1558–1561

A reluctant suitor – again

Two days after hearing of the death of Mary Tudor in November 1558, Philip gave orders to remove 'England, France and Ireland' from his seals and style. He also forfeited the title 'Defender of the Faith', conferred on England's monarchs by the Papacy. In the monastery of Groenendaal, near Brussels, where he mourned his father, the arrival of so much bad news depressed the king. Even small setbacks, like the illness of the brother of the count of Feria, his representative in England, made Philip wallow in self-pity: 'I hope that God will restore his health – unless the fact that *I* hope for it will harm him,' he wrote grimly to the count. But he still devoted much thought to the future. Just before Feria departed on his last mission to London, Philip ordered that if Mary were still alive when the count arrived, he should suggest to Elizabeth, his sister-in-law, that she should marry Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy; but if Mary had died, Feria must immediately suggest to Elizabeth that she should marry the newly widowed king – a proposal of stunning insensitivity.[1]

Feria's next letter, written four days after Mary's death, communicated three pieces of unwelcome news. First, Philip had become very unpopular in England.

> The people bitterly resent that the late queen sent large sums of money to Your Majesty . . . and that the problems that the kingdom faces are Your Majesty's fault; that they lost Calais; and that because Your Majesty did not come to see the late queen, she died of grief.

Second, Mary's intransigence and Philip's own procrastination had prevented him from playing a part in Elizabeth's accession: 'The new queen and her subjects hold themselves free of Your Majesty'. Third, England now seemed on the brink of chaos: 'with the change of sovereigns, and of ministers, there is

so much uproar and confusion that fathers do not know even their own children'.[2]

Despite all these setbacks, Feria asked permission to convey Philip's offer of marriage to Elizabeth, as instructed, but the king now had second thoughts. 'I see many obstacles in the way of achieving my desire, according to the conditions you describe,' he wrote; and until he knew whether she would accept his offer, 'I shall not write to Elizabeth'. Shortly afterwards, the arrival of a special messenger from the new queen brought some reassurance. Elizabeth professed not only 'grief and sorrow' at the 'departure to God' of her 'dearest syster the queen his late wife' but also expressed 'our zeal and affection to continue the old and perfect amity that from time to time hath been so friendly maintained' between their predecessors; and she signed her personal letter of condolence '[your] sister and perpetual ally'.[3] Feria, too, regained a measure of optimism because (as he put it to Philip) the fate of Catholicism in England 'depends upon the husband that this woman chooses, because if she does what she should, our faith will do well and the kingdom will remain Your Majesty's friend; and if not, all will be lost'. Specifically, Feria continued, 'If she does decide to marry a foreigner, she will look favourably upon Your Majesty' – adding tactlessly 'When Your Majesty married the late queen, the French resented it greatly and they will resent it now if Your Majesty marries the present queen, because of her age and character, because in both she far excels the late queen.' When on 14 December, not even a month after Mary's death, Feria formally suggested to Elizabeth the possibility of marrying Philip, the queen politely asked what conditions her former brother-in-law had in mind.[4]

This gambit presented the king with a dilemma, reflected in two holograph letters written on 27 December 1558. One, to Feria, procrastinated. In effect, the king ordered the count to buy time until he had decided whether or not to conclude another 'English match':

> Concerning what Elizabeth asks about my intentions about this marriage, what I can tell you now is this: because it is a matter of such great importance and weight, even though we talked about it in your presence, as you will remember, I want to examine and think about it much more. Meanwhile, you must deal with the queen in a way that neither raises nor dashes her hopes, but rather draws this matter out until I can make up my mind.

Philip's second holograph letter, addressed to Elizabeth herself, was far less ambiguous – indeed, it was the only occasion on which he expressed love for a spinster his own age. Because of 'the desire I have always had to further your contentment and ease', he assured her that 'I shall take no less care of your affairs, being those of a sister whom I love so much, than I take of my own'.[5]

Over the next three months, the king dictated several letters to Elizabeth, always using the salutation 'To the most serene princess Elizabeth, queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the faith, our very dear sister and cousin', and referring to 'the royal person and estate of Your Highness'. These apparently routine phrases were significant, because they reveal that Philip did not share the doubts about Elizabeth's legitimacy held by his late wife (and many other Catholics, including the pope), and that he still considered his 'very dear sister and cousin' to be a Catholic.[6] This correspondence dealt principally with three items of business: how to secure the best terms from the French at the peace conference in the frontier town of Cateau-Cambrésis; how to prevent the pope from deposing Elizabeth on the grounds either of illegitimacy or because she had not made her submission to Rome; and how to counter the claims of Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland and a Catholic married to the heir to the French throne, to be the legitimate successor of Mary Tudor. But both parties scrupulously avoided all discussion of marriage.

Philip's indecision irritated Feria. 'It is necessary for Your Majesty to get a grip on this matter,' he warned, 'and take immediate steps to ensure both that the king of France does not gain a foothold here and that the vineyard that Your Majesty planted should not be ruined.'[7] These reproaches hit their mark: on 10 January 1559, Philip replied that 'having examined and thought about the matter a lot, even though I see many and great obstacles' – all described in numbing detail – 'I have made up my mind to perform this service for God Our Lord', namely 'to marry the queen of England, and to use all appropriate means to achieve this, provided it can be done with the conditions and in the manner that I am about to tell you'. The king specified three conditions, all non-negotiable. 'The first and most important of these is that you must secure from the queen a promise that she will adhere to the same religion as me, which is the one I will always hold, and that she will continue in it and maintain and preserve her kingdom in it.' Next, 'the marriage contract made with the late queen stipulated that the Netherlands should be joined with England to form a single inheritance for any son born of the marriage; but that could have led to grave problems, and it could lead to even greater ones now, since the prince my son [Don Carlos] is now grown up'. Therefore 'under no circumstances will I agree to this'. Finally, 'because of the great and extreme necessity that exists for me to return to Spain I have resolved that, even if the marriage takes place and I go to England to take care of necessary business . . . I will not stay there, even if the queen should not be pregnant, because she is young enough to wait for my return to that kingdom to conceive others'. Philip fully recognized the outrageous nature of this last condition, because he added for Feria's benefit: 'Although this is what would suit me, and what I have decided, which is to return to Spain at the end of next summer, even if I have to go in a small yacht',

nevertheless 'it would be better not to say this to the queen, but rather "at a convenient moment", or even "after concluding the marriage" '.[8]

If this message seemed grudging, a second letter to Feria that same day – this time in the king's own hand – was glacial:

> Nothing on earth would have made me take the decision you will see [in the other letter]: I do it to see if this might prevent that lady [Elizabeth] from making the changes in religion that she has in mind, and so to serve God. You would do me a very great service if you can ascertain what she wants to do, because I do not want to be in suspense right now; and, whatever happens, I want very much to go to Spain.

He concluded: 'Tell me exactly what happens, because I feel like a condemned man wondering what is to become of him. And, believe me, I would be just as happy with either outcome, because having offered myself to God, I think He will lead me to do whatever is better for His service.' Two weeks after stating his conditions, Philip once again let off steam to Feria. 'Believe me, if it were not to serve God, I would never do this, even if I thought I could become ruler of four worlds,' he raged. 'Nothing could or would make me do this, except the clear knowledge that it might gain the kingdom [of England] for His service and faith.'[9]

Elizabeth's enthusiasm for matrimony matched that of her reluctant suitor. As long as his conditional offer of marriage remained on the table, Philip was obliged to protect her against her French and Scottish enemies, whatever policies she followed. So although she addressed Philip as her 'most dear brother, cousin and ally' in their official correspondence, she refused to renew England's submission to Rome or to attend Mass – unmistakable signs that she did not intend to fulfil the first of Philip's non-negotiable conditions: that she and her kingdom remain Catholic. Only in March 1559 did she respond to Philip's offer of marriage. Feria reported to his master incredulously that she first stated that 'she had no wish to marry'; then that 'although she could clearly see how the marriage would maintain the king's honour and the defence of his dominions, maintaining a close friendship with Your Majesty would attain both goals'; and 'finally, that various people had told her that as soon as Your Majesty had come to marry her, you would immediately leave for Spain'.[10]

Mumbling that the matter 'could be postponed for another day', Feria left the audience and his report to the king adumbrated possible strategies for turning Elizabeth's 'no' into 'yes'; but Philip had anticipated rejection. 'I have just learned the queen's decision about our marriage,' he replied upon receiving Feria's news, and continued (with palpable insincerity), 'and although I could not help feeling regret that it did not prove possible to achieve something that I wanted so much, I am content; what makes her happy makes me very happy.'[11]

He neglected to inform Feria that he felt particularly 'happy' because he was now free to wed another Elizabeth.

The death of Mary Tudor brought Philip gains as well as losses. Above all, it removed a major stumbling block to the conclusion of peace with France: Calais. The victory at Gravelines (chapter 3) had already demonstrated that the Low Countries could be defended without English control of Calais; now, freed of the need to keep his English spouse and subjects happy, 'it made no sense that we should not make peace for the sake of a single town: better to let the French keep Calais'.[12] In addition, Henry II of France had offered the hand of his eldest daughter, Isabel, to Don Carlos, as a way of guaranteeing peace between the two dynasties; but now that Philip was a bachelor again the French negotiators insisted that he should marry Isabel instead. On 23 March 1559, the very day that Philip received news of Elizabeth Tudor's rejection, his plenipotentiaries informed the French that 'His Majesty wishes to marry the eldest daughter of the king of France, requesting the same terms and conditions as those agreed for his son the prince'.[13]

The peace signed at Cateau-Cambrésis on 3 April 1559 secured every one of the goals that Charles V had laid down for his son in his 'Political Testament' a decade before (chapter 2). Admittedly, Henry II made a few gains from the treaty – but not from Philip. Thus he acquired Calais from England; he retained the three imperial enclaves in Lorraine seized from the Holy Roman Empire in 1552; and he gained the right to garrison some bases in the duke of Savoy's Italian territories. But although both sides handed back their conquests in the Netherlands, Henry not only ceded almost all the rights and possessions claimed by Philip in Italy but also agreed to withdraw his troops from the lands of Spain's principal allies: Savoy, Mantua and Genoa.

Spain or England?

Although Cateau-Cambrésis thus greatly strengthened Philip's position on the continent, it greatly reduced his ability to influence affairs – especially religious affairs – in England. Realizing that a Protestant triumph in England would jeopardize his control over the Netherlands, shortly before signing the peace Philip expressed in a holograph letter to Feria his perplexity about what to do next. He began 'This is certainly the most difficult decision I have ever faced in my whole life' (a phrase he would use frequently later in his reign):

> It grieves me greatly to see what is happening over there [in England] and to be unable to take the steps to stop it that I want, while the steps I can take seem far milder than such a great evil deserves . . . The evil that is taking place in that kingdom causes me great anger and frustration . . . but I believe we

> must try to remedy it without involving me or any of my vassals in a declaration of war until we have enjoyed the benefits of peace [for a while].

He added 'My only aim is to get it right [*azertar*]' (another of the king's favourite phrases) before lapsing into self-pity. 'May God grant that things turn out the way I want, but I am so unlucky that when I want something this much, it often turns out badly. This is how the world works.'[14]

Philip only hardened his attitude when Elizabeth openly broke with Rome, and Paul IV gave his full approval for the king to invade and overthrow Elizabeth – 'a venture entirely worthy of a "Catholic King" ' – promising to invest him, should the invasion succeed, as king of England.[15] But could Philip accept? His ministers in Spain bombarded him with warnings that they faced challenges that might overwhelm them unless he returned; and, as he confided to Feria, 'If I do not leave soon, I will not find a Spain to go to. That is why we must conclude our business here.' The strain of wrestling with these incompatible alternatives left the king exhausted. In late June 1559 he told Granvelle, in a rare abdication of responsibility, 'if any urgent missive should arrive, you may open it' and 'write to me about it' at the same convent near Brussels where he had mourned his father and his wife: 'I will go there tomorrow, to deal with other matters that I cannot handle here; and also to recover my health, because I am very much afraid that it will fail me. I have not been well these past days.'[16]

Throughout his long reign, at times of crisis Philip often secluded himself in order 'to deal with other matters that I cannot handle here', occasionally for weeks; but this time, astonishing news brought him out of his seclusion almost immediately. While jousting, Henry II had received a severe head wound from which he died on 10 July 1559, and his son Francis, already king of Scotland thanks to his marriage to Mary Stuart, now also became king of France. Philip and his ministers pondered the impact of this dramatic development. As Granvelle pointed out to a colleague in Spain, Philip's departure from northern Europe might precipitate 'developments that could do irreparable damage to His Majesty and to his successors. It cannot be a good thing for him to leave the Netherlands with English affairs as they are at present and relations with France not settled. I am not sure that the needs of Spain are so great that they exceed ours.' A few days later, the English ambassador at Philip's court couched the dilemma in more specific terms: 'When the king is once departed, it may chance whilst he studieth to kepe Spain pure from Protestantship, he may fynde [heresy in] Flanders at his retourne well advanced.'[17]

A scathing letter from the regent Juana and her advisers soon settled the matter: she reported that 'Protestantship' had already taken root in Seville, Valladolid and several other Spanish cities. In addition, the princess pointed

out, high taxes, disrupted trade and poor harvests had raised tensions throughout Spain, while many parts of Aragon verged on open insurrection. Above all, Juana insisted, in spite of the bankruptcy of 1557 (chapter 3) Castile's treasury was empty. She included a detailed memorial revealing an annual revenue of 1.5 million ducats – already alienated for 1559, 1560 and part of 1561 – and immediate obligations of over 4 million for defence and for interest payments on a total debt of 25 million ducats. Therefore, Juana continued relentlessly,

> Not only can Spain not provide Your Majesty with the enormous sum you say you need, but not even the smallest amount; nor can we meet the necessary ordinary expenses of these kingdoms. What the service of Your Majesty needs most is that you return to these realms as fast as you can, as I have so often written. Once Your Majesty has arrived, I hope to God that His assistance and your presence can restore the order necessary both to provide assistance for the Netherlands and remedy affairs here – which we cannot do in your absence.

Philip's cheeks evidently flushed as he read this barrage of reproaches, because he scribbled to his secretary: 'The council is not to see this, nor must you show this passage to anyone.' He continued: 'They have had a good laugh' at his expense, and concluded bitterly 'I do not wish to deal with these matters. Instead I want to do what I know is best for me, which is to leave' for Spain.[18]

Philip now concentrated on preparing for his journey. He sent two of his most trusted councillors to Spain bearing a list of urgent questions: how best to improve Spain's defences (galleys, fortifications, munitions); which public works ('such as ports and docks, bridges and roads', and public granaries) were under construction or planned (each town must send in a list); how to improve 'river navigation and irrigation'; how to increase industrial production (especially textiles); how to eliminate imports of 'linen, paper, and other things' by developing domestic production; and how to raise revenues and reduce debt. Juana must create a committee of experts to discuss these matters, 'and, given their importance, they must be discussed in secret. On no account must anything become public knowledge.' Moreover the committee must start its deliberations at once, 'so that once I arrive, and receive their recommendations', he could take the appropriate actions.[19]

It proved harder to reorganize the government of the Netherlands, in spite of receiving some useful last-minute advice on the subject from his father. The emperor's trusted companion, Luis Quijada, passed on advice delivered by Charles just before he died on what he thought his son should do 'before Your Majesty leaves the Netherlands':

> You should create a council composed of the individuals who seem most suitable, and who have the greatest experience of war in the Low Countries. The duke of Savoy should govern according to the advice of the said council, as was the custom when His Majesty [Charles] appointed regents there – although he also said that it would be necessary to give much thought to those individuals, because in some of them he saw difficulties.[20]

Philip followed this posthumous advice from his father as best he could. The first obstacle he faced was the refusal of Emmanuel Philibert to remain as regent: the French evacuated Savoy after the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, and naturally the duke insisted on going home. Philip therefore needed to appoint another close relative, and he eventually chose Duchess Margaret of Parma, Charles's illegitimate daughter, even though she lacked political or administrative expertise. Philip tried to remedy her inexperience in three ways. First, as he had done with Juana five years before (chapter 2), he spent several weeks instructing her in person about his overall aims and how she could help him to achieve them. Second, again as he had done with Juana, Philip issued detailed Instructions that left her little room for manoeuvre, requiring Margaret both to inform him of every matter of note and to take no decision without consulting him first. He also gave her a list of candidates to be appointed in strict order of seniority to ecclesiastical vacancies as and when they became available. Finally, Philip followed Charles's advice and created 'a council composed of the individuals who seem most suitable, and who have the greatest experience of war in the Low Countries'. Since the emperor died before he could enlighten his son about those potential councillors in whom 'he saw difficulties', Philip chose men with competing ambitions as well as complementary talents. Count Lamoral of Egmont, the victor of Gravelines, boasted great military prestige and also, like Prince William of Orange, combined diplomatic expertise with widespread international contacts (Egmont had spent time in England and Spain negotiating the marriage with Mary Tudor; Orange had helped to negotiate Cateau-Cambrésis; both men had many friends and relatives in Germany). Overshadowing all of them stood Granvelle, who for the previous fifteen years had planned and executed delicate diplomatic and administrative missions for the Habsburgs. Until he left the Netherlands, Philip consulted Granvelle daily on all affairs of state, and for some years afterwards he communicated all important orders through him rather than through Margaret.

Some idea of the difficulties Margaret and Granvelle would face after the king left emerged in Ghent in July 1559, when for the first time Philip exercised his powers as sovereign of the Order of the Golden Fleece to convene a meeting of all its members. Such gatherings were normally boisterous – the 'Sovereign' and each knight delivered a formal critique of everyone else's behaviour since

the last meeting – but this time, according to his own account, Philip provoked uproar when he asked the knights to do three things: 'First, that they should elect [to the Order] only Catholics; next, that from now on they should take great care to punish all heretics in their domains; and finally that they should hear Mass every day.' Although almost everyone accepted the first, several objected to the second (on the grounds that adequate legislation already existed, so that to single out the knights called their devotion into question) and 'they objected even more to the third, saying that they were all Christians and so were already obliged to do so'.[21] Eventually Philip gave up the struggle and set off to join the fleet assembled in Zeeland to carry him home to Spain.

As he waited for a favourable wind, Philip's spirits rose somewhat. He told Granvelle 'I feel well, and I have done so since I got here, since I can travel around these islands where there are more opportunities to exercise'. Yet anxiety and anguish still lay close to the surface.

> The delay in my departure seems very dangerous to me, but since this depends solely on the will of God, I can only wait for whatever He is pleased to grant; and I hope that, since He has removed worse obstacles from my path, He will also remove this one, and provide me with the means to hold on to my dominions, and not let them be lost because I lack the means to hold on to them, which would be the saddest thing for me and something I would regret more than anything else one can think of – and much more than if I lost them in battle. I tell you that I'm leaving with grave concerns about what I will find.

The next day, 25 August 1559, he set sail from the Netherlands for Spain. He would never return.[22]

Spain under quarantine

The 'grave concerns' that preoccupied Philip included irrefutable evidence that Protestant heresy had taken root in Spain. In May 1558 Inquisitor-General Fernando de Valdés had submitted a comprehensive report on how the religious situation had evolved 'since Your Majesty left these kingdoms' (surely not a casual choice of words). He began by lamenting the 'great number of Bibles and other books of Holy Scripture, all contaminated and filled with Lutheran material', found in Salamanca 'as well as in many other towns of these kingdoms, both in the possession of individuals and of convents and universities'. Next he described an upsurge of Moorish and Jewish worship elsewhere in Spain before returning to the 'large number of Lutherans' arrested in Seville, Valladolid, Salamanca and many other towns.[23]

Far away in the Netherlands, apparently Philip did not grasp the seriousness of these developments. He did not reply for six months and then, writing 'from our camp', he urged Valdés 'to proceed with full rigour against those in prisons, so that such a great evil may be stopped and punished without pity'. He added that to avoid 'any delay in doing what is needed through seeking to consult me while I am on campaign', the Inquisitor-General must 'give a full account of these matters to His Majesty [Charles V], because I know he will be willing to listen, decide and execute what the situation requires'.[24]

Valdés had no intention of taking his orders from Yuste. Instead, he worked to convince the regent Juana that since 'in perilous times the anchor of the faith and of the Monarchy' of Spain 'had always been the Inquisition', he now needed extensive new powers. Valdés also explained the gravity of the situation to Pope Paul IV, detailing his success in uncovering 'a large number of Lutherans', and he requested papal briefs that would permit Inquisitors to pursue and prosecute all suspects. Valdés entrusted his correspondence to his nephew, with orders to reveal them only to the pope in a private audience. Neither he nor Juana sent a copy of the document to Philip, nor did they reveal that one of the briefs Valdés requested would empower the Inquisition to gather information on possible heterodoxy concerning all 'bishops, archbishops, patriarchs and primates living in Spain', and to arrest and imprison any who might attempt to 'flee or otherwise try to leave the kingdom'.[25]

Valdés and Juana had already identified a potential suspect: Fray Bartolomé de Carranza, architect of the re-Catholicization of England, whom the king had just appointed archbishop of Toledo (and thus Primate of Spain) and also (unknown to Valdés) governor of Spain and tutor to Don Carlos should the king die.[26] While awaiting the brief, Valdés ordered all the 'Lutherans' already incarcerated to be interrogated about Carranza, using torture if necessary to secure incriminating evidence. He also asked selected bishops and theologians to read and assess the orthodoxy of Carranza's writings, especially the catechism he had published earlier that year to win over the Protestants of England.

Philip did not intervene directly in the Carranza affair until December 1558, when he told Juana to urge the Supreme Council of the Inquisition (the 'Suprema') 'to punish thoroughly and harshly the heretics whom I hear are over there [in Spain], and to neglect nothing that might advance this goal, whoever is implicated – even it should be the prince'.[27] Nevertheless the king seems to have seen the accusations and counter-accusations for what they were – part of the 'factions that have formed or are being formed among my ministers' that Charles had warned him about (chapter 1) – because in April 1559 he granted a private audience to Fray Hernando de San Ambrosio, Carranza's personal envoy, who reported to his master that Philip's answer 'showed me how much he loves Your Lordship, and that the things that have been written and said to

him have not changed the high opinion he has of you'. Admittedly, when Fray Hernando requested, on behalf of Carranza, permission to ask the pope for assistance, the king refused; but immediately afterwards, he wrote to reassure his primate that all was well, urging him 'most strongly to make no change in what you have been doing up to now, and to seek help from no one except me.'[28] Although Philip was a master of dissimulation, the warmth and intimacy of this letter confirm the impression he gave to Fray Hernando that at this stage he still had a 'high opinion' of his primate.

Carranza nevertheless remained uneasy. He informed the king of his fears that Valdés 'would use the powers of the Inquisition as an instrument to achieve his goals or avenge his grievances', adding that 'if he could, he would make me out to be a heretic'.[29] He was right: a few days later Valdés received a papal brief authorizing proceedings against any prelate suspected of heresy, and he immediately convened the Suprema, together with some of the crown's legal experts, 'to read and consider the evidence' against Carranza. The committee agreed 'to begin proceedings against the archbishop, according to the papal brief', and then composed a letter cunningly crafted to secure Philip's approval. The Inquisitors noted that those already condemned for Lutheranism included friends and disciples of Carranza, several of whom had denounced him, whereas he had not denounced any of them; they also asserted that the archbishop's catechism contained numerous Protestant ideas and phrases. Lest any royal doubts survive, the Inquisitors resorted to naked blackmail, exploiting two of Philip's anxieties: his conscience and his authority. Unless the king approved the arrest, they argued, Carranza might 'convince others to follow his false and heretical opinions, and then we do not know how Your Majesty's conscience and reputation could remain untainted – besides the danger that royal authority would suffer if the matter should end up in the hands of the pope, because we do not know how he would respond or how the business would end'. The Suprema concluded with an ingenious ruse: Carranza should receive a letter 'urging him in the name of Your Majesty or of the princess [Juana] to come to this court', where he could immediately be placed under house arrest.[30]

The Suprema's letter placed the king in an impossible position: he could either uphold the authority of the Inquisition or he could save Carranza, but he could not do both. His reply, dated 26 June 1559, revealed that the blackmail had worked: Philip authorized the Suprema 'to proceed in this and other matters with the rigour that their serious nature requires, without considering anything other than the service of Our Lord, the well-being of the realms that God has entrusted to me, and the discharge of my conscience'. He also approved the ruse.[31] As soon as this letter arrived, Juana informed Carranza that 'the service of God and the king requires that you should come to this city of

Valladolid to discuss some extremely important matters that I will share with you when you arrive', adding that 'I would be very glad if you could come at once, even if you have to travel light. Appropriate lodgings will be provided.' When the archbishop nevertheless delayed, a posse of Inquisition officials surrounded the building where he lay sleeping, and just before dawn burst into his bedroom saying, 'You have been arrested by the Inquisition'. When he reached Valladolid, under guard, Carranza found out the meaning of Juana's promise to provide 'appropriate lodgings': the Inquisitors placed him under guard in two small rooms and, lest anyone should doubt his ultimate fate, they auctioned off his personal goods in the city square.[32]

Although Philip had approved Carranza's arrest, he may not have realized that this formed only part of a comprehensive program conceived by Valdés to control Spain's intellectual life. In April 1559, the Inquisitor-General issued an order 'that no person, university or college' could henceforth 'issue a judgement or opinion about any book on any subject without first submitting that judgement of opinion to the council of the Inquisition'; and he announced his intention of prohibiting almost 700 'books listed in the Catalogue that We have ordered to be compiled'.[33] Six months later the king attended an auto-de-fé in Valladolid. 'It was extremely solemn,' according to an eyewitness, 'because the king our lord was present in his full majesty. He stood, removed his hat, and took an oath in the hands of the Inquisitor-General that he would uphold the business and the ministers of the Catholic Church'. Some forty nobles and a crowd of perhaps 200,000 observed this significant act of deference, listened to the sentences passed on those convicted, and watched some of them being taken away to be burned alive. According to the chronicler Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, when one of them reproached the king for allowing him to burn, Philip replied 'I would carry the wood to burn my own son if he was as wicked as you.'[34]

In November 1559, the king signed a final measure prepared by Valdés to root out heresy: a proclamation prohibiting all Spaniards 'from leaving these realms to study, teach, learn, attend or reside in any university, school or college abroad'. Students and teachers currently abroad had four months to return, on pain of losing their benefices (for clerics) and their possessions (for laypeople); while 'the degrees and courses' of those who henceforth studied abroad 'will not count, and will never count, for anything' in Spain.[35]

It would be hard to exaggerate the cumulative impact of the measures conceived by Valdés and enacted by Philip and his sister in 1558–9. Certainly, they halted the practice of Protestantism in Spain – there would be no more 'Lutheran cells' and little circulation of heretical books – but keeping the lands of the Catholic King free from heresy came at a high price. After 1559, Spain was in effect quarantined from the rest of the world: without express approval

from the Inquisition, no ideas could enter and no scholars could leave. Moreover, within Spain, the spate of arrests and accusations meant that no one – whether cleric or lay – could safely express any opinion about religion. As the count of Feria (still abroad) put it: 'Affairs in Spain are taking a turn for the worse, because we are getting to the stage where we will not know who is a Christian and who is a heretic'; and so, he opined, where religion was concerned 'it is better to be silent'.[36] But silence was not always possible: between 1560 and 1562 over a hundred members of the Spanish elite, including Feria, received a summons to give testimony under oath to the Inquisitors involved in the trial of Carranza. Even the king had to do so – twice.

The trial of the century

On 4 September 1559, a week after Carranza entered Valladolid in custody (and four days before Philip returned to the city), Valdés confronted his victim and demanded a full confession of guilt. To his surprise, the primate first pointed out that Pope Paul had died before the Inquisition arrested him, and so the brief was invalid, and then noted that the Inquisition's own protocols required a judge who was 'impartial and above suspicion'. Since Valdés 'is my declared enemy . . . according to justice and law he should recuse himself as my judge'. Carranza later presented twenty-five charges to support his claim that not only the Inquisitor-General but also two other members of the Suprema 'hate me' and so should recuse themselves from the case. The accused had become the accuser.[37]

Carranza's remarkable memory allowed him to recall his past with great precision: places, dates and subjects; opinions, speeches and sermons; relations with a vast number of people in Spain, at Trent, in England and in the Netherlands. Although he was occasionally vague and evasive (he was, after all, on trial for his life), he managed to recreate in detail, with amazing accuracy, all that had happened to him right down to his arrest. Furthermore, having worked for the Inquisition for twenty-five years, he knew exactly how to use its standard operating procedures to his advantage. First, although the Inquisitors concealed the identity of his accusers, so that Carranza could not demand that they too recuse themselves, he could discredit hostile testimony by demonstrating that a *potential* accuser was a 'declared enemy' and so should not be believed – and his evidence discredited more than thirty other individuals (we now know that almost all of them had indeed testified against him). The second legal recourse allowed by the Inquisition to all accused was the right to present evidence that either refuted specific charges of heresy or else provided an innocent context for a suspect remark. Third, the archbishop (like all those accused) could present evidence of the *good* things he had done at every stage of his life: his

piety, poverty and humility; his alms and acts of charity; above all his resolute and enthusiastic persecution of heretics in England and the Netherlands. In all three categories, Carranza formulated lists of questions and named those from whom the Inquisitors must secure an answer. On several matters he 'called as a witness King Philip, our lord'.[38]

In January 1560, two Inquisitors and their secretary arrived at the royal palace and asked the king to answer five questions about whether or not Valdés hated Carranza. It was probably the first time he had been interrogated since his father's prying questions about his sex life as a teenager (chapter1) and he opted to study the questions in private and submit a written response. 'I would not know if hatred or enmity exists' between the two, he answered evasively, 'because if it does, it would be in their thoughts, which no one can know or judge with certainty.'[39] Two years later, the Inquisitors returned and interrogated the king in person on whether he had heard certain sermons preached by Carranza in the royal chapel while he was in Brussels, and if 'the doctrine that he preached was sound and Catholic'. Philip replied, with evident irritation, that 'in the sermons by the archbishop that I heard in 1558 and 1557, I never heard anything that could have given offence to me or anyone else; and *since I am not a theologian* that is all I can say on the subject.' As the notary read his answer back, Philip had second thoughts about the phrase in italics and crossed it out before he signed his testimony (see plate 25).[40]

Gradually, Philip realized that Valdés had indeed acted through animosity, and his confidence in the Inquisitor-General waned. In 1566 he suspended Valdés from his post. But he would go no further: the credibility as well as the authority of the Holy Office was at stake – and the king could hardly challenge the institution for which he had proclaimed his support so often. From the moment he approved Valdés's plan to arrest and imprison Carranza, the king needed a conviction just as desperately as the Suprema and for the next seventeen years he struggled to achieve this goal – to no avail. In 1567, despite Philip's strenuous efforts, Pope Pius V summoned Carranza (whom Philip now described as 'the criminal with the highest profile in these kingdoms') to Rome and continued his trial there. For the next nine years, the king's fears of an acquittal led him to bombard both Pius and his successor with warnings 'of what the world would say' and 'what a triumph it would be for the heretics if they should see that someone who had held, concealed and written false doctrines should be exonerated by Your Holiness'; and when in 1576 Gregory XIII announced Carranza's relatively mild sentence – just five years' suspension from his office as primate of Spain – the king was outraged and protested vehemently that 'it should have been harsher, given the nature of the trial'. Only the archbishop's death two weeks after sentencing put an end to the disagreement (and to the prospect that he might try to return to Toledo).[41]

Creating a court and finding a capital

On 9 October 1559, the day after presiding over the auto-de-fé, Philip left Valladolid and ordered the central government to relocate to Toledo. According to Cabrera de Córdoba, the decision reflected the king's outrage that heresy had contaminated the city, and this may indeed have been a contributory factor; but it had been clear for some time that the government could not remain indefinitely in Valladolid. A year earlier, Princess Juana informed her father that, after five years of continuous residence, the court needed to move because 'with so many people here, and so much going on, there are more problems than anyone could imagine.' She believed that Madrid 'would be best', failing which she suggested Guadalajara, Toledo or Burgos as potential capitals.[42] During his first year back in Spain, Philip would visit each of these cities; but, before he left Valladolid, he carried out a delicate and important task – welcoming a brother he had never met into the royal family.

In February 1547, in Regensburg, Barbara Blomberg gave birth to a son by Charles V (chapter 2). In stark contrast to his dealings with the illegitimate daughters born before his marriage, whose personal lives he constantly micromanaged, the emperor seldom admitted to being the boy's father. He even failed to mention him in his last testament, executed in 1554, instead drawing up a special codicil devoted to a boy named Jerónimo, which he sealed and gave to Philip, with orders not to open it until after his death. Meanwhile Charles entrusted his younger son to his comrade-in-arms, Luis Quijada and his wife Doña Magdalena de Ulloa, who carefully and discreetly supervised the boy's education in Spain.

Philip thus discovered that he had a brother only after Charles's death and his feelings at this discovery – a mixture of delight and disgust – emerge from his initial reply to a letter in which Quijada revealed the true identity of 'that person whom Your Majesty knows is in my care'. At first, the king wrote enthusiastically 'concerning don Juanyto, *I was delighted to learn that he is my brother*' – a frank recognition of the boy's parentage, and of the new name that he had chosen for him – but then Philip had second thoughts and deleted this phrase, replacing it with the noncommittal '*concerning that boy*, I was delighted to read what you wrote about him', and he ordered Quijada to conceal the boy's identity 'until I arrive' in Spain.[43] Despite this apparent indifference, at the assembly of the Golden Fleece held in Ghent in July 1559, of the fourteen new knights created by Philip one remained anonymous until after the two brothers met for the first time near Valladolid two years later. On that occasion, in a highly unusual gesture of affection, Philip embraced and kissed his twelve-year-old sibling and dubbed him Knight of the Golden Fleece. He also gave him the title 'Don John of Austria' together with a formal household, under

Quijada, and arranged for him to take his place at court beside Charles's other grandsons, Alexander Farnese (son of Margaret of Parma) and Don Carlos, both born in 1545 and thus only two years his senior.[44]

In November 1559 the expanded royal family took up residence in Toledo, which briefly became the capital of the Spanish Monarchy, and six months later, led by Princess Juana and Don John, the entire political elite of Castile swore allegiance to Don Carlos as 'prince and successor to the kingdoms of his father and, after his death, as their king and natural lord'. The ceremony lasted nine hours, followed by banquets and jousts (in one of which Philip led a 'team'). The prizes were awarded by another teenager who had joined the royal family in January 1560: Philip's third wife, Isabel of France.

Toledo did not please the young queen. Soon after she arrived, she contracted smallpox and told her mother: 'I can assure you that if it were not for the pleasant company of my husband in this city, I would judge it one of the most disagreeable places on earth'. She was not alone. Philip's courtiers found little convenient accommodation because the Tagus surrounded the city on three sides, and climbing up to the royal castle through steep and winding streets – many of them too narrow for a horse – left them exhausted. Before long, 'because the streets were so filthy and so narrow, and because of the high price of food', most courtiers wanted to leave.[45]

Some expected the court to return to Brussels, but as the king explained to Granvelle, although 'I love Flanders very much, and now more than ever' he lacked funds 'even for trivial things, so that you would be shocked if you saw it. I tell you that I never thought while I was there [in the Netherlands] that things could be like this' in Spain. So if not in Brussels, Valladolid or Toledo, where would Philip locate his capital? He settled the matter on 8 May 1561, when he signed a letter alerting the city council of Madrid that, 'having determined to travel with our court to your city', he was sending officials there to 'prepare accommodation for our household and court'.[46]

In retrospect, the decision seems inevitable. In 1536 the emperor had embarked on extensions to the medieval Alcázar on a bluff at the outskirts of the city, and it served as Philip's headquarters during his second regency (1551–4). While still in Brussels, he purchased parcels of land around the Alcázar, and also on the other side of the Manzanares to form what would become the Casa de Campo, and he ordered the master of works to construct 'a fine suite of rooms with glass windows that look out on to the fields' (see plate 27). The 235,000 ducats spent on remodelling the Alcázar between 1536 and 1562 produced (in the words of Véronique Gérard), 'the largest royal palace complex in Spain. Its size, configuration, and the presence of a chapel and a great hall facilitated court life.'[47] Even when the king was absent from his new capital – in 1563–4 when he spent almost six months visiting his Aragonese

inheritance; in 1570 when he toured Andalusia; even in 1580–3 while he went to Portugal – the bureaucracy, the diplomatic corps and the rest of the royal family all remained in Madrid.

From peace to war again

Philip inherited from his father a war with Suleiman the Magnificent (chapter 3), and the strain on his resources led him early in 1558 to authorize his agents to secure a long truce with the sultan (although he kept their negotiations secret in order to avoid revealing Spain's weakness to the French). Later that year, as soon as he was elected Holy Roman Emperor, Philip's uncle Ferdinand also sent envoys to arrange a truce with the Turks, and Philip sought to use this initiative as a front to conceal his own negotiations. The sultan refused, declaring that he would deal only with Ferdinand: if Philip wanted an armistice, he would have to beg for one publicly. In March 1559, still fearful that the war with France might drag on, Philip swallowed his pride and approved draft terms for a ten- or twelve-year truce with Suleiman; but the favourable terms of Cateau-Cambrésis led him to change his mind. 'In view of the peace concluded between me and the King of France', and in view of the advanced 'age of the sultan and the anxiety that the discord between his sons causes him, I believe that neither negotiating nor concluding a truce with him is in my interest'. Instead, Philip reasoned, 'without the friendship of France, and lacking ports to welcome his fleet, the Turks will not send their fleet against Christendom', and he ordered all his forces in the Mediterranean theatre to rendezvous in Sicily in preparation for a surprise attack. In June 1559, still in Brussels he directed the duke of Medinaceli, viceroy of Sicily, to lead these forces to recapture Tripoli.[48]

This decision mired Philip's dominions in a war that lasted more than eighteen years and tied down resources needed to respond effectively to threats elsewhere: how could he have made such a catastrophic miscalculation? Perhaps his participation in two victorious campaigns against France had given the king delusions of invincibility while doing God's work? Or perhaps he saw it as his destiny. As a child he had memorized medieval legends of knightly combat between Christians and Moors, and an emblem prepared for him in 1548, on the eve of his departure for the Grand Tour, showed a sun with the name 'Philip' and the motto *Donec auferatur Luna* (until the moon disappears) which, the author explained, meant that 'this sun, Philip, who represents Your Highness', should fight 'until you have removed the moon from the Turks and Arabs and others who take it as their emblem'. The following year the prince received a presentation copy of a book, with a binding that sported the names of both Philip and Christ in gold letters, which called upon him to bring peace

to Christendom, extirpate heresy and wrest Constantinople and Jerusalem from the Turks.[49]

Brussels, however, was a poor place from which to orchestrate the recapture of Tripoli (let alone Constantinople or Jerusalem). By the time Philip's orders reached Italy, more than a month had passed and news both of Cateau-Cambrésis and of the concentration of ships in Sicily had reached the Ottoman garrison of Tripoli, which now hastened to repair the port-city's fortifications. This news caused Medinaceli to lose his nerve – 'He felt he needed more troops to carry out the venture' – and his expeditionary force did not leave until December.[50] Predictably, winter storms drove it back.

Many military experts at once realized the significance of these delays – an attack that lacked the element of surprise was less likely to succeed and more likely to attract an immediate Ottoman counter-strike – but Philip held firm and the expeditionary force set out once more in February 1561, landing near Tripoli. Medinaceli promptly lost his nerve again and retreated to the island of Djerba (also known to Spaniards as Los Gelves), halfway between Tunis and Tripoli, which his men fortified. There, just as the military experts had feared, the Ottoman fleet encircled them. The Spaniards suffered heavy casualties in the pitched battle that followed and the survivors took refuge behind their fortifications and begged Philip to save them.

The king now found that Toledo was little better than Brussels as a place from which to orchestrate campaigns in the Mediterranean. With his elite forces marooned on Djerba, the king became desperate. According to Secretary of State Gonzalo Pérez, who saw Philip every day, 'this has touched His Majesty to the quick, and so he has ordered major and immediate preparations'. Indeed, Pérez continued, 'he is so determined to ensure that relief reaches the duke of Medinaceli and the troops who remain on Djerba that if it should be necessary he will commit the rest of his resources and also his royal person'.[51] This boast did not save the starving defenders of Djerba, who surrendered to Suleiman and took part in his victory parade through the streets of Constantinople. Most recovered their freedom only after a decade of captivity. It was a devastating reverse. According to the French ambassador, 'No one would believe how much the loss of this fort has affected the court, Spain and all its dependencies, and how ashamed they are of . . . having so miserably abandoned so many good men without doing anything to relieve it.' 'His Majesty,' he added, 'seems to be draining the bitter cup slowly.'[52]

The 'cup' was 'bitter' indeed: many of the veterans lost at Djerba had a lifetime's training in naval warfare, and without them Philip could not guarantee the safety of his Mediterranean possessions. To replace them, he therefore reluctantly decided to withdraw the 3,000 Spanish veterans whom he had left in the Netherlands.

At first it seemed that Philip had over-reacted: for the next two years the Ottoman fleet stayed out of the western Mediterranean, which allowed him to send troops into France in 1562 to support the regency government against a Protestant rebellion. As usual, the king justified such a rash military initiative in messianic terms. 'Although the expense has come at a bad time,' he wrote,

> it seems clear to me that the service of God (which is the main thing) and of me and my dominions requires me to send assistance to the Catholics. I realize that it involves a risk, but allowing the heretics to prevail would undoubtedly risk far more – because if they do we can be sure that all their energies will be directed against me and my dominions, to make them [Protestant] too.

And that, he concluded defiantly, 'I will never allow or tolerate, even if it should cost me 100,000 lives (if I had them).'[53]

Then, in 1563, Ottoman forces besieged the Spanish outpost of Oran, forcing Philip to concentrate his attention and his resources on the Mediterranean. According to a Netherlands minister at court, 'No one here speaks of anything but the siege of Oran' – adding that preparing a relief expedition 'has already cost more than 600,000 ducats'.[54] Although Philip's forces eventually relieved Oran, and the following year captured and fortified an outpost near Algiers, coordinating these operations kept the king in Spain: as Gonzalo Pérez put it, 'Since Castile is the core [of the Spanish Monarchy] which has to succour and support other parts, I do not know how His Majesty could abandon it.'[55]

Combating the Turks drained Philip's resources. A senior minister observed that 'I have seen the statements from the treasury, and they are certainly depressing; but if God would free Your Majesty from war, a lot could be done'.[56] It was not to be: in 1565 news arrived in Madrid that Suleiman had prepared almost 200 vessels – the largest fleet recorded since Antiquity – and in May they carried 20,000 Ottoman soldiers to the island of Malta, where they laid siege to the headquarters of the Knights of St John. For the next six months, arranging for the relief of Malta became Philip's top priority, forcing him once again to neglect all the problems that faced him elsewhere, including in the Netherlands.

CHAPTER EIGHT

'I would rather lose a hundred thousand lives if I had them': keeping the faith, 1562–1567

The disaster at Djerba in 1560 had important repercussions throughout the Spanish Monarchy, including the withdrawal of the Spanish veterans from the Netherlands in order to shore up the defence of the Mediterranean. 'Please God,' Philip wrote, 'that everyone there [in the Netherlands] will now see the love and sympathy with which I handle their affairs, because now to placate them I am doing something that I fear will be greatly to my disadvantage.' Some ministers played down the significance of Philip's decision. It was 'something necessary or, rather, obligatory', wrote Gonzalo Pérez, who prayed that God 'will sustain us in such a way that we will not regret it one day. But, as they say, "out of the frying-pan and into the fire" .' In Brussels, Granvelle was more sanguine. The Spanish veterans, he warned the king, 'upheld our prestige with our neighbours, and perhaps also served as a brake on the native population. May God grant that their departure does not stir up something.'[1]

Granvelle was right. The Spaniards not only served as a rapid response force should a crisis arise in northern Europe: they could also intervene in case of domestic unrest – and for that very reason the king's Netherlands subjects feared their presence. Everyone knew that a single Spanish regiment sufficed to uphold Philip's control over Milan, Sardinia, Naples and Sicily; and the count of Egmont spoke for many when he complained to William of Orange, just before the king left the Netherlands, 'I believe that so many innovations make people unhappy'. In particular, 'the king is totally determined to retain the Spanish infantry and demobilize all the other troops: I leave you to guess his reasons'. At a tense meeting with Philip during the chapter of the Golden Fleece

held in July 1559 (see chapter 3), both nobles threatened to resign their offices if Philip did not withdraw the Spanish troops. Only the king's counter-threat to withhold a promised cash reward brought them to heel.[2]

Orange, Egmont and their colleagues possessed a powerful forum in which to express their opposition to 'innovations' that 'make people unhappy': the States. Each of the seventeen provinces that recognized Philip as their ruler in 1549 had their own States (Staten, États) composed of representatives of the clergy, nobles and towns who met regularly to handle matters of common interest – above all, legislation and taxation. Periodically Charles V had asked each of them to send delegates to a States-General to hammer out common policies, and Philip did the same as soon as he went to war with France in 1557, convening an assembly explicitly to vote new taxes. After months of bargaining, the deputies sanctioned taxes worth the unprecedented sum of 3.6 million ducats, payable over nine years, but they insisted that the proceeds must be both collected and disbursed by their own agents. Philip bitterly resisted this, correctly foreseeing that the States would thus gain the power to withhold funds if he failed to redress their grievances; but French military pressure forced him to give way. In January 1559 the States-General created a standing committee to oversee the collection and disbursement of the 'Nine Years Aid' by each province. Although Philip dissolved the assembly soon afterwards, the provincial States continued to meet and – just as Philip had feared – several of them threatened to withhold the proceeds of the Nine Years Aid unless he withdrew the Spanish garrisons.

The disaster at Djerba resolved this issue, but a few weeks after the withdrawal of Spanish troops another 'innovation' came to light: the creation of thirteen new bishoprics and an archbishopric of Mechelen, whose incumbent would become primate of the Netherlands. In addition, two canons in every cathedral chapter would now act as Inquisitors, and every prebend in the new hierarchy must be a university graduate. The new bishoprics scheme had much to recommend it. Until that time, only four bishops served the three million inhabitants of the Habsburg Netherlands so that, from a Catholic standpoint, adding more sees and creating a single hierarchy made good sense. So did improving the educational standards of the senior clergy, and making ecclesiastical frontiers follow linguistic lines, so that the bishop, his clergy and their parishioners all spoke the same language; but the formula adopted to fund the scheme proved a disaster. The obvious way to pay for the new bishoprics was a tax levied on all clerical revenues, but instead Philip proposed that each new bishop should take over as abbot of a rich local convent, and receive its revenues. Not only did this measure make poor ecclesiastical sense (the same prelate could not efficiently carry out both tasks) but it was bound to create a political firestorm because several of the abbots about to be displaced had voices and votes in the provincial States.

This ambitious ecclesiastical reorganization represented the fruit of long planning by Philip and his advisers, but implementation required papal approval. To secure it, the king prepared a characteristic passive-aggressive letter to Pope Paul IV.

> I, as a most obedient son of the Church, cannot refrain from reminding and urging, and with the greatest vehemence requesting . . . Your Holiness to view with favour and approve as soon as possible the plan for the Netherlands as I have requested for so long . . . It would cause me the greatest grief and regret if I could not finalize the religious situation of these provinces before I leave [for Spain], and thus ensure that no problems arise in my absence – but if they do it would be a great blot on Your Holiness's conscience, since you had the means to take appropriate action so easily.[3]

The blackmail worked: no sooner had he received this threatening message from his 'most obedient son' than Paul approved a bull authorizing the creation of the new bishoprics along the lines proposed by the king; but the bull arrived just as the king prepared to board his ship for Spain, forcing him to delegate implementation to his regent, Margaret of Parma. Almost at once Paul died, which inevitably created new delays while his successor, Pius IV, reviewed the entire scheme.

Still fearful that 'problems could arise in my absence', Philip decided to keep the whole venture secret until all details had been finalized, and so it became public knowledge only in March 1561 when another papal bull announced the names, duties and revenues of the new prelates – starting with the archbishop of Mechelen: none other than the king's close adviser Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, whom the pope also made a cardinal. Henceforth, Granvelle took precedence over Orange, Egmont and everyone else at all official functions.

These changes alienated the entire political elite of the Netherlands. Those abbots forced to resign their places (and their revenues) to the new bishops naturally objected vociferously and mobilized their colleagues in the provincial States against the scheme. The magistrates of major cities like Antwerp (which now became the seat of a diocese) objected equally vociferously to the introduction of Inquisitors, since many visiting merchants were Protestants who might stay away if they feared arrest for heresy. The nobles resented the king's insistence on appointing only graduates to the rich church livings traditionally occupied by their own offspring. Finally, everyone felt insulted that such a complex scheme had obviously been in preparation for many years, yet Philip had made no attempt at consultation. The various opponents of the scheme

therefore turned their ire on the new head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: Granvelle.

The cardinal had already made many enemies, chief among them Ruy Gómez and Francisco de Eraso, whose important role in the central government survived the move to Spain. They found a valuable ally in Philippe de Montmorency, count of Hornes, captain of Philip's bodyguard, who in 1561 requested and received permission to return to the Netherlands on the grounds that the king never listened to his advice. His return coincided with the turmoil caused by the new bishoprics and he informed Eraso that 'since this is a matter that does not affect me, I do not wish to say more about it. I only want to tell you that the cardinal is in charge of it all, and if things go wrong, His Majesty should lay the blame on him alone.' The secretary immediately showed the letter to the king, hoping to discredit Granvelle, but for the time being Philip did nothing.[4] Next, Hornes persuaded Orange and Egmont to join him in signing a letter to the king threatening that unless the cardinal left the Netherlands, they would all resign their offices. The count also organized an informal league of the cardinal's enemies, who dressed in the same livery with a badge on their sleeve that showed a fool's cap (in parody of the cardinal's hat), and they refused to attend Margaret's council whenever Granvelle was present. This fatally compromised her ability to govern and in 1563 she sent her brother an ultimatum: unless he returned to the Netherlands in person at once, Granvelle would have to go.

Hornes and his colleagues had struck at a moment when the king was extremely vulnerable. On the one hand, their minatory letter arrived at court at the same time as news that Ottoman forces had laid siege to Oran, and in the words of a minister at court, 'on its outcome depends many other things – including whether we [*sc.* the king] stay here or return there [to the Netherlands]'. On the other hand, the enmity between Ruy Gómez and the duke of Alba had created serious instability in policy-making (chapter 4). An astute French observer wrote that 'The success and perseverance of the [Netherlands] nobles in their quarrel is based on the partisanship and divisions that exist at the court of Spain' because the two prominent ministers 'spread their wings over the furthest dominions, like Flanders, where the duke supports Cardinal Granvelle while Ruy Gómez, who since the time of the late emperor [Charles V] has been his enemy, on the contrary favours the nobles'.[5] Ruy Gómez therefore supported Margaret's ultimatum: if the king wanted to safeguard his authority in the Netherlands he must either return or remove Granvelle. In March 1564, preoccupied by the defence of the Mediterranean, Philip reluctantly ordered the cardinal to leave Brussels. 'Now we will see,' he observed cautiously, 'how things turn out.'[6]

The origins of the Dutch Revolt

The fall of a ministry, in the sixteenth century as today, meant not only the removal of the principal adviser but also the eclipse of his policies and his supporters. In Brussels, the dissident nobles returned to Margaret's council and pressured her to halt implementation of the new bishoprics scheme, while several provincial States warned her that unless she suspended the laws against heresy 'an uprising by the people' might ensue.[7] The religious situation soon changed. Whereas over 600 men and women faced prosecution for heresy in the province of Flanders in 1562, when Granvelle still enforced the king's will, the total fell to 250 the following year and to scarcely 100 in 1564; but at the same time, the number of heretics increased. The rise of Protestantism in France, England and Germany had created asylums to which Dutch dissidents could retire to escape persecution; now, with Granvelle's departure, many exiles returned and began to hold open-air services with impunity near the borders.

Economic circumstances heightened the tension. In 1564–5, a landmark winter caused widespread misery and ruined the next harvest, while the outbreak of war between Denmark and Sweden threw out of work many families in the Netherlands who produced or shipped exports to the Baltic, as well as interrupting the import of Baltic grain. Both unemployment and food prices therefore increased. As unemployment and the price of bread continued to rise, one observer fretted that 'I do not know if it will prove possible to restrain the common people, who are discontented and protest loudly'. Moreover, he continued perceptively, 'If the people rise up, I fear that the religious issue will become involved.'[8]

Margaret's aristocratic advisers chose this moment to insist that the best way to halt heresy was to remove the mandatory death penalty imposed on heretics, arguing that magistrates reluctant to kill for the sake of religion would once more be willing to act. They decided to send Egmont to persuade the king to sanction this change, and also to secure more power for Margaret's council. Just before the count left Brussels, news arrived from Constantinople that 'the Turks are preparing 120 galleys and 10 large transports' ready for a major campaign in the Mediterranean. Confident that this would force the king to give way again, Egmont arrived at court in February 1565 and lodged with Ruy Gómez. He remained there for six weeks.[9]

Philip's top priorities at this point were to defend the Mediterranean in case of a Turkish assault, and to prepare a meeting at Bayonne between his wife Isabel and her mother, Catherine de' Medici, to reconcile policy differences between France and Spain. Maintaining the status quo in the Netherlands was essential to the success of both ventures, and so when Egmont arrived at court the king procrastinated for as long as possible. He flattered his visitor by ostentatiously

consulting him on military issues (Egmont had fought with Charles V in Africa and Germany before his great victory over the French at Gravelines); the count, for his part, dazzled Don Carlos, now aged 20 and increasingly interested in the affairs of northern Europe, with accounts of his military exploits. But eventually Egmont became impatient and warned the king that unrest in the Netherlands would abate only if he appointed four of his noble friends to Margaret's council, and granted that body full powers 'to handle all affairs of state'. Faced with these new demands, Philip oscillated between frustration and anger. 'I have so much on my mind that I scarcely know what I am saying or doing,' he protested even as he speculated about the motives that underlay the count's demands: 'I think we have reason to look into the motives of those, both here and in the Netherlands, who have put Egmont up to this.'[10] Then news arrived that the Turkish fleet had left Constantinople and was heading west, forcing the king to seek a way to keep the Netherlands peaceful during the coming Mediterranean campaign. He opted for deception, appearing to comply with the count's wishes without making any concessions. In particular, he would agree to create a 'Theological Committee' in the Netherlands, composed of bishops, lawyers and theologians, to consider whether it might be possible to change the method of punishing heresy without furthering its spread. When Gonzalo Pérez, a cleric as well as secretary of state, questioned the wisdom of this, Philip reassured him that 'under no circumstances do I wish the punishment of heretics to stop . . . I only want the method of punishment to be considered' because 'if we sacrifice religion, I will sacrifice my dominions'. Therefore, the king continued, 'my intention, as you will have gathered, is neither to resolve these demands of the count, nor to disillusion him about them, for then he would worry us to death and we would never be finished with him – and I am dying to get rid of him because he does not let me get on with any of the other things that I have to do.' Philip and Pérez worked together on various drafts of instructions for the count, until the king wrote with an audible sigh, 'everything appears fine to me: may God grant that it will satisfy Egmont so that he will leave'.[11]

Pérez's final draft incorporated many passages crafted by the weary king, but also included a rhetorical flourish of his own: 'What matters most to me is that there be no change in religion, and I would think nothing of losing a hundred thousand lives (if I had them) rather than agree to that.' The instructions ended by expressing Philip's regret that he could neither leave Spain 'to visit and relax in the Netherlands' nor send sufficient funds to implement his policies; but with 'the increasing threat from the Turkish fleet, which as you know is advancing in such force against my kingdoms', the defence of the Mediterranean must take precedence.[12]

Philip and Pérez calculated that Egmont would be at his most gullible if he received his instructions during a personal meeting, and accordingly the king

summoned him to an audience on 4 April 1565. At the outset, he confirmed Egmont's disputed title to two towns in Brabant and allowed him to accept an honorarium of 50,000 ducats offered by the province of Flanders. Having thus softened up his victim, Philip delivered a carefully prepared speech emphasizing the need to maintain the exclusive exercise of the Catholic religion, but he made much of the Theological Committee and promised a speedy resolution of all other issues as soon as he had consulted with Margaret. Philip's only specific requirement was that wearing the anti-Granvelle liveries must cease: 'Count, it must stop,' he interrupted, when Egmont tried to explain. A few days later the count rode off for Brussels 'the happiest man in the world', his wildest hopes of personal wealth and political success fulfilled.[13]

By contrast, the performance left the king drained. It was the sort of public confrontation that he loathed, and planning the elaborate deception had prevented him from transacting other business. He was 'so exhausted by what has just happened', Philip told Pérez, 'and so deprived of sleep' that he could not concentrate. A week later he still felt 'preoccupied and starved of sleep because I need to spend most nights looking at papers which other business prevents me from seeing during the day'.[14] Shortly afterwards the king gave up the unequal struggle with his paperwork and rode off alone to spend some time hunting and fishing at the Bosque de Segovia, confident that he had won the breathing space in the Netherlands essential for success both in the Mediterranean and at Bayonne.

Egmont's spirits were still high when he reached Brussels. He (quite falsely) assured everyone that, despite the clear phrasing of his instructions, the king intended to relax the heresy laws and enhance the powers of Margaret's council. In any case, the count continued smugly, 'being preoccupied with the war against the Turks, who are expected to attack Malta, His Majesty finds it impossible to come to the Low Countries this year'. (The Ottoman siege of Malta began on 18 May.) Encouraged by this information, the council usurped 'sovereign control of all public affairs' and instructed the Theological Committee to discuss ways of 'moderating' the heresy laws – precisely what Philip had forbidden it to do.[15]

At least criticism of royal policy temporarily ceased, but the king himself squandered all the benefits of his studied ambiguity on 13 May 1565, when he signed a packet of apparently routine letters to Margaret, including one that quashed the appeal for clemency by six Anabaptists condemned to death and ordered that they should be burned. The king's administrative style had betrayed him. Pérez, who had worked so hard with the king to craft Egmont's Instructions, did not prepare the letters of 13 May; instead the task fell to Charles de Tisnacq, the Netherlands minister who normally handled French-language correspondence. No doubt because in the past Philip had always

approved the execution of heretics, Tisnacq now prepared a short letter rejecting their appeal, just as he had done on previous occasions, and he sent it to the king for signature. Since it was in French, the king may not even have read it; Margaret and the Netherlands nobles, by contrast, read and pondered every word.

Shortly afterwards, news arrived in Brussels that Ottoman troops had landed on Malta, and the following month the Theological Committee produced a report that strongly recommended relaxing some of the heresy laws. Margaret duly forwarded this to Philip, asking both for his decision and also for clarification of his position 'on several matters which Count Egmont had heard from the royal lips, [because] Your Majesty's letters [of 13 May] appear, at certain points, to contradict the report he has made'. She and her advisers now awaited the king's response anxiously, realizing that 'not even the capture of Constantinople, let alone the relief of Malta, would help the Netherlands'.[16]

Margaret's letter, and its unwelcome enclosures, reached Philip late in August, and Pérez immediately drafted a stern response that included a flat rejection of the proposals of the Theological Committee; but with Malta still under siege, Philip dared not sign it. Instead he used excuses such as 'I had a terrible headache yesterday and this morning' to postpone taking decisions on Netherlands affairs because, as he told Pérez, 'there is so much to consider, and it is so important to get things right'.[17] Only in October, advised by both Pérez and the duke of Alba, who had just returned from masterminding negotiations with the French at Bayonne, did he elaborate a comprehensive solution to outstanding Netherlands problems.

To avoid the possibility of any further contradictions, the king ordered Pérez to draft *all* the answers to Margaret's letters, making copies in his own hand of the ones in French before asking Tisnacq to prepare fair copies. He also checked the completed letters against his drafts. Between 17 and 20 October 1565, while at the Bosque de Segovia, the king signed almost a hundred letters that clarified his position on all issues: the heresy laws must remain intact; the inquisitors must continue their work; all captured heretics must be executed; Margaret's council would receive no new powers; none of the new members proposed by Egmont would join it. A special envoy explained to Margaret that her brother could not concede more because 'it would not only be a grave blow to his authority and honour but would also forfeit reputation and respect' – to which Margaret observed presciently that it was better to forfeit 'reputation and respect' than to forfeit dominions.[18]

Although Philip must have realized that his decisions would not be popular, he cannot have anticipated the dramatic reaction that ensued. Already, on receipt of the king's letter of 13 May ordering the execution of the Anabaptists, some Dutch nobles had met informally to discuss possible responses should

the king flatly refuse to moderate the heresy laws once his Mediterranean campaign ended. In November, on receipt of the letters from the Bosque de Segovia, the same group of nobles met again and prepared a petition, known as the 'Compromise', calling for abolition of the Inquisition and the heresy laws. They rapidly secured about 400 signatures – almost one-tenth of the Netherlands aristocracy – and although no grandees signed, the marquis of Bergen and the prince of Orange resigned all their offices and many others threatened to follow suit. With central authority thus in abeyance, on 5 April 1566 some 300 confederates rode fully armed into Margaret's palace to present an ultimatum based on the Compromise, demanding that she immediately suspend all the heresy laws. Abandoned by everyone, Margaret reluctantly complied: she issued a 'Moderation' that instructed all inquisitors and magistrates to cease enforcing the heresy laws until further notice. She also deputed two nobles sympathetic to the confederates, Bergen and the baron of Montigny (Hornes's brother), to go to Spain and persuade Philip to approve her concessions.

Protestant exiles now streamed back from France, England, Germany and the Swiss Canton and exploited Margaret's orders to leave Protestants alone. The long summer evenings, and the unemployment caused by the continuing war between Denmark and Sweden, which crippled all Baltic trade, allowed Calvinist preachers to attract thousands of hearers to their open-air sermons. In a letter dated 19 July 1566 Margaret warned her brother that the Netherlands lay poised on the brink of rebellion, and she presented him with two alternatives: 'Either take up arms' against the Calvinists and return to Brussels in person, 'or authorize the concessions' already made in the Moderation.[19]

While the courier bearing Margaret's disturbing message was still en route, the Spanish council of State debated the growing crisis in the Netherlands. On 26 July Philip informed Montigny, newly arrived at court, 'that he did not like the terms of the Moderation that he had been sent, and did not wish them to continue; and that he had decided to go to the Netherlands in the spring to restore order to everything'. To this 'Montigny replied angrily, bringing colour to His Majesty's cheeks, that this decision was not appropriate' because spring was eight months away, and between then and now 'His Majesty will face other pressing matters'. He added provocatively that 'delays and procrastination had created all these problems and would create many more'.[20]

Montigny would pay with his life for 'bringing colour to His Majesty's cheeks', but the arrival of Margaret's dramatic letter of 19 July postponed his punishment. On 31 July, just five days after telling Montigny that he would make no concessions, Philip crumbled. After protesting that 'in truth I cannot understand how such a great evil could have arisen and spread in such a short time', he authorized Margaret to abolish the Inquisition in the Netherlands, suspend all laws against heresy and pardon the opposition leaders. Then, just

as he had done twelve years before, when forced to accept the marriage treaty negotiated by his father with Mary Tudor (chapter 3), Philip recorded before a notary that since his concessions had been extracted under duress he did not consider them binding. He also reassured the pope – as he had reassured Gonzalo Pérez – that 'rather than suffer the least injury to the Catholic faith and the service of God, I would rather lose all my dominions and a hundred thousand lives if I had them'. Finally, he authorized Margaret to raise 13,000 soldiers in Germany, sending letters of credit to pay for them; but by the time news of his change of policy arrived in the Netherlands, what Dutch chroniclers would later call *Het wonderjaar*, 'The year of miracles', had already begun.[21]

The year of miracles

On 10 August 1566, St Lawrence's Day (and thus the anniversary of Spain's great victory at St Quentin), a small group of Protestants entered a Flemish monastery and smashed all its images. Nine days later, Egmont informed Philip that 'at present all Catholic worship in the province of Flanders has ceased' and that 'all trade has ceased, so that 100,000 men in the Netherlands who used to earn their bread now beg for it . . . Much depends on this,' the count added ominously, 'because poverty compels people to do things that otherwise they would never have thought of doing.' That same day, Margaret signed another frantic letter to her brother claiming that 'almost half the population over here practise or sympathize with heresy' and that the number of people who had taken up arms in defiance of her authority 'now exceeds 200,000'.[22]

For a while the iconoclasts targeted only isolated convents, but on 22 August a column of Calvinists entered Ghent, the capital of the province of Flanders, and systematically smashed the images, stained glass and other visible symbols of Catholic worship in every church and convent. With the world collapsing about her, Margaret now received the king's concessions of 31 July and immediately published them – but they came too late to halt the Iconoclastic Fury. Within a few weeks, gangs had smashed images and stained glass in over 400 churches and monasteries, and Calvinist congregations began to hold services in several of the churches thus 'purified'.

News of these stunning events reached Philip on 3 September 1566, and that night he went down with a fever. Over the next four days he 'was bled twice. Therefore there was no way to handle any business, and His Majesty has signed nothing.' Alonso de Laloo, the count of Hornes's agent at court, stressed to his master the dire consequences of these developments for those who had demanded so many concessions over the past four years: the king 'will lack neither troops nor money' to do whatever he wants, Laloo warned, because a fleet from America had just arrived at Seville with almost five million ducats,

the highest total ever recorded. In addition, the kingdom of Naples had voted the king taxes worth two million ducats, and the Cortes of Castile (just summoned) would surely vote even more. 'These funds will suffice not only to subjugate what His Majesty inherited in the Netherlands,' Laloo exclaimed, 'but also to acquire new dominions.' Everyone in Spain, he continued, believed 'that the rebellion in the Netherlands aims at complete liberty, without obedience to either God or the king'. A week later Laloo predicted that 'sooner or later, without fail, His Majesty will exact vengeance for such great disrespect, and if he leaves Spain it will be with more strength and power than any king has ever taken to the Netherlands'. The question was no longer whether Philip would use force to restore order, but when.[23]

On 22 September 1566, although the king seemed to the Portuguese ambassador 'somewhat weak, his face showing signs of his many purges and bloodlettings', he presided over a meeting of the council of State – a highly unusual action. The meeting took two critical decisions: 'that the situation in the Netherlands could not be remedied without troops'; and 'that only His Majesty in person' should command them.[24] The council next considered Spain's overall strategic position, noting two temporary but critical advantages: the Ottoman sultan had invaded Hungary, which would remove pressure in the Mediterranean theatre of operations; and although neither France nor England would welcome suppression of the Dutch Revolt by force, neither had the means to mount effective resistance. The council therefore recommended that Philip concentrate as many troops as possible in Lombardy and lead them to the still-loyal province of Luxemburg, where they would join forces with 60,000 other troops to be raised in Germany. The king and his mighty army would then crush all opposition.

The council of State convened again in the king's presence on 22 October 1566 to discuss the evolving situation. Those present restated their conviction that to permit the troubles to continue 'would jeopardize the reputation of Spain' by providing an 'example of weakness that would encourage other provinces to rebel'. They therefore still saw the use of troops as unavoidable – but how should they be deployed? Ruy Gómez argued that, if the king went to the Netherlands in person to restore order, only a small number of troops would be required; but Alba and others objected that, given the extent of the insurgency, this strategy would place the king at grave personal risk. Instead they proposed that the Spanish troops now assembling in Lombardy should march to the Low Countries and suppress all sedition, after which the king could arrive by sea.[25]

But who should lead the troops from Lombardy and command the army of repression? The duke of Alba, Spain's most experienced general, was 60 and in poor health (gout had kept him immobilized for much of the autumn) but in November he agreed to sail to Italy in spring 1567 and take command of the

troops assembled to suppress the Dutch Revolt. As the official historian of the House of Alba later wrote, even if the decision to send the duke did not turn out well, it was virtually the only option at the time, 'since the Netherlands situation was like a snowball rolling down a mountain of snow'.[26] Some of those who had signed the Compromise, fearing the worst, now tried to recruit troops in France and Germany, but they failed; by contrast Margaret used the money received from Spain to raise troops who, on 13 March 1567, routed a large group of insurgents at the battle of Oosterweel, near Antwerp. All over the Netherlands, Calvinist worship ceased; towns that had defied the king hastened to make their peace; and most dissidents, including the prince of Orange, fled abroad.

The following month, Alba had a long one-on-one audience with his master at Aranjuez. The two men agreed that, thanks to Oosterweel, restoring order in the Netherlands would no longer require the 72,000 soldiers at first envisaged: Alba's veterans from Italy, plus the troops already mobilized by Margaret, would now suffice. They also agreed that Philip should assemble a fleet in one of Spain's Atlantic ports ready to depart on 15 August carrying the king and his court to the Netherlands – assuming that the duke had got there first and eradicated all opposition. Cardinal Diego de Espinosa would remain as 'governor' of Spain.[27]

The duke then left Aranjuez but upon reaching Milan he hesitated, fearing that the exodus of so many veteran troops might leave Italy exposed to a Turkish attack. He did not leave for the Netherlands until 18 June, leading his veterans along a 700-mile itinerary that contemporaries (some in admiration and others in fear) would call 'the Spanish Road'. He reached Luxemburg on 15 August – the exact date on which Philip and his court were supposed to set sail from Spain.

The voyage that never was

Alba's progress reports as he marched slowly along the Spanish Road had already revealed that he would not arrive in the Netherlands in time to implement the original plan, and on 7 August Philip sat down at his desk to inform his lieutenant that he had decided to postpone his departure until the following spring, a decision 'that I felt I should make known to you at once, with secrecy and dissimulation, so that you will be forewarned and can take the appropriate steps'. The king conveyed this message in a unique way: spending several hours alone, armed with the code books normally used by his clerks, he laboriously enciphered his thoughts on how to restore order and stability in the Netherlands. 'This letter is sent to you in such secrecy,' he assured Alba, 'that no one in the whole world will ever find out what it contains' (see plate 27).[28]

The king dealt first with how to punish those involved in the insurgency. Originally, he had instructed Alba to round up all suspects before the royal fleet arrived; but now, 'I am not sure if this can be done with the appropriate security and thoroughness', so that it would be wise to delay any arrests – especially since a delay might 'lead the prince of Orange to feel secure and be willing to return to those provinces'. Then 'you would be able to deal with him as he deserves'. By contrast, 'if you punish the others first, it will make it impossible ever to deal with him'. Events would vindicate the king's insight but, unfortunately for his plans, he immediately made a crucial concession: 'I delegate all these matters to you, as the person who will be handling the enterprise and will have a better understanding of the obstacles or advantages that may prevail, and of whether it is better to move quickly or slowly in this matter of punishment, on which so much depends.'

Next the king turned to the problem of who would govern the Netherlands until he arrived himself the following spring. He had dispatched Alba from Spain with full powers to command the royal army but ordered him to share civil authority with Margaret. At the height of the Iconoclastic Fury the previous year, Margaret had pleaded with the king to send troops; but now that she had restored order she bitterly opposed Alba's approach and bombarded both Philip and the duke with requests to halt his march. When her pleas failed, she informed the king curtly that she had decided 'to leave here in October' whether His Majesty came or not. Philip therefore entrusted Alba with full powers to govern the Netherlands until he arrived in person.

Finally, the king addressed a third consequence of his decision not to sail at once to Flanders: the cost of maintaining Alba's Spanish troops until he arrived. He asked how much the Netherlands might be expected to pay and how much would have to come from Spain (reminding the duke that, having spent a million ducats on arranging his march, the Spanish treasury was now short of funds). Philip concluded his unique excursion into cipher by repeating the need for secrecy: Alba must send his responses to the king in person and to no one else – especially not to Tisnacq, who normally handled Netherlands affairs at the court of Spain. 'Writing like this has not fatigued me at all,' the king concluded (unconvincingly), and in any case 'it was necessary because of the contents'.

Alba made full use of the king's permission to disregard the contents of the letter. Although during his first two weeks in Brussels the duke felt 'forced to hide my claws', he then created a secret tribunal to try those suspected of rebellion and heresy. A few days later, he arrested Egmont, Hornes, their secretaries and 'anyone who had signed the Compromise' whom he could locate, commenting smugly that 'I managed to have them arrested on the charge of treason' (for which the punishment was death).[29] As soon as news of the arrests

arrived at the royal court, Philip ordered the arrest of Montigny and urged Alba 'to use all speed' in trying those imprisoned on presumption of treason, 'because you know that the matter should be concluded before the spring'. He also now made public his decision to delay his voyage to Flanders. In his somewhat defensive letter to the pope he gave two explanations: 'because of the dangers involved in sailing the Atlantic in winter', and 'even more because it seems to me that certain matters should be resolved before I get there' – that is, the same strategy that Philip had adopted in the Carranza case: he wanted the dirty work done before he arrived.[30]

Events would soon show that Philip's decision to delay his journey to the Netherlands was a critical error: only his return to Brussels could have stabilized the situation. If Orange and the other nobles who had fled to Germany refused a direct summons to explain their conduct to Philip in person, they would have lost credit both at home and abroad. Had the king been present, they would also have found it difficult to mount an invasion of the Netherlands as they did against Alba in 1568 because few if any German rulers would have allowed them to recruit troops. Finally, the king's presence would have made it hard for the States-General to refuse the taxes needed to pay for Alba's troops.

Why, then, did Philip change his mind about the voyage? It all came down to timing. In his meeting with Alba at Aranjuez, the king had agreed to set sail from Spain on 15 August, but the duke did not arrive in Brussels until 22 August. Since even the fastest courier needed ten days to reach the fleet waiting in Cantabria, he could not now set sail before September – and by then Philip had another reason to remain in Spain: he was about to become a father once more. In August 1566 Queen Isabel had given birth to Isabella Clara Eugenia, and early the following year she became pregnant again. Even when Alba left Aranjuez in April, the queen knew that she would give birth in mid-October – and, unlike Mary Tudor, she had calculated correctly, giving birth to her second child, Catalina Michaela, on 10 October 1567.

'His Majesty will face other pressing matters'

Philip now had three children as well as a fertile and intelligent wife to serve as his regent: everything suggests that he planned to resume preparations for his return to the Netherlands in spring 1568. But, as Montigny had warned him: any delay involved the risk that 'His Majesty will face other pressing matters' to distract his attention from the Netherlands. And indeed, three totally unrelated distractions – two in America and one in Spain – forced Philip to remain in the Iberian peninsula.

In 1562 a group of French Huguenots sailed to Florida and established a fortified colony, which they called New France. From there they could threaten

every treasure fleet returning from America to Europe, since all had to sail through the Bahamas channel to gain the easterlies that would take them home. Before long, Spanish forces captured some settlers who, under interrogation, revealed details of the location, size and defences of the Huguenot base. They also stated that a second expedition, currently fitting out in France, would soon bring reinforcements. This alarming news reached the king in March 1565, and he immediately authorized Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, who had extensive experience in commanding transatlantic convoys, to lead an expeditionary force from Seville and take possession of Florida.

The king hesitated to sanction a direct attack on New France because his wife was about to meet her mother at Bayonne in an attempt to settle all outstanding disputes amicably, but Alba, head of the Spanish delegation, strengthened his resolve. The duke recommended mobilizing a second fleet both to intercept the reinforcements and 'to expel the French from their bases quickly'; and suggested that 'the council of the Indies should put down on paper the reasons why Your Majesty believes that the French should not settle there' – a 'paper' that Alba would submit to the French at Bayonne.[31] Meanwhile, after building a fort on the Florida coast that he called San Agustín, Menéndez launched a surprise attack on the French colony, sparing the women and children but killing most of the men in cold blood and imprisoning the rest. News of these events reached Spain in February 1566, and Philip enthusiastically endorsed the executions and condemned the rest to lifetime servitude rowing his galleys. He also funded the construction of twelve purpose-built vessels in the shipyards of Bilbao to form a permanent flotilla to safeguard the Caribbean and Florida against further Protestant attack. The total cost of this notable extension of Spain's American dominions was scarcely 250,000 ducats – about one-quarter of the cost of sending the duke of Alba to Flanders.

All the same, Philip could not rule out the risk of further French incursions, and this influenced his response to a challenge that arose shortly afterwards in New Spain. After the death of Viceroy Don Luis de Velasco in 1564, some colonists demanded that Philip name as Velasco's successor the largest local landowner, Don Martín Cortés, marquis del Valle and son of Hernán Cortés. They also requested the right to meet periodically in an assembly ('parlamento') to discuss and determine the affairs of the viceroyalty. Two years later the judges of the Audiencia, who exercised executive authority in New Spain after Velasco's death, heard rumours that several landowners planned to mount a 'rebellion and uprising' aimed at 'killing the said judges and others who upheld the authority of Your Majesty', and elect Cortés as their ruler. Some reports claimed the conspirators had links with alienated settlers in Guatemala and Peru – a daunting prospect because five years before, Lope de Aguirre had fortified Margarita island, declared himself king of Peru, and proclaimed: 'I

renounce my links to the kingdoms of Spain and no longer recognize the king of Castile as my sovereign'. In July 1566 the judges of New Spain therefore reacted firmly: they arrested and imprisoned Cortés and several others, two of whom they executed almost immediately. At this point, a new viceroy arrived, suspended the sentence on Cortés, and sent him to Spain in custody. The judges thereupon accused the viceroy of sympathizing with the rebels and demanded that the king recall him.[32]

News of these dramatic events reached Spain in March 1567. The Portuguese ambassador at Philip's court heard that '700 Spaniards in New Spain have conspired against the king', while his French colleague, Baron Fourquevaux, noted that 'the king has so many regions to worry about that he cannot deal with all of them'.[33] The king shared these concerns and he too reacted firmly. He recalled the new viceroy in disgrace and sent out special commissioners to investigate 'the rebellion and uprising that some have attempted against our authority in New Spain'. Eventually his officials tried eighty-nine people (including twenty-two major landowners and twelve clerics) for the crime of rebellion, of whom they executed ten, sentenced seven to serve on the galleys or in a distant garrison, and condemned several more to perpetual exile from America.[34] The Cortés rebellion was the last in New Spain for well over a century.

Philip thus demonstrated that he could deal with 'other pressing matters' in the western hemisphere without becoming distracted from Netherlands affairs; but the same could not be said of his own family. In the course of 1567 the behaviour of Don Carlos gave cause for concern, and in January 1568 Philip decided that his son and heir posed a serious security threat. The king therefore arrested and imprisoned him. This development could not but affect Philip's plan to return to the Netherlands, and the process by which he came to terms with its implications appears in the draft of his letter to Emperor Maximilian explaining the reasons for his son's arrest. It originally ran 'I expect to go to the Netherlands in the summer'; but, on reading it through, the king changed this to 'since I will not be going to the Netherlands this year'.[35] Little did Philip realize, as he made this small change, that 'this year' of 1568 would see not only the incarceration and death of his son and heir, but also the death of Isabel of France, leaving him a widower with only two infant daughters to succeed him.

CHAPTER NINE

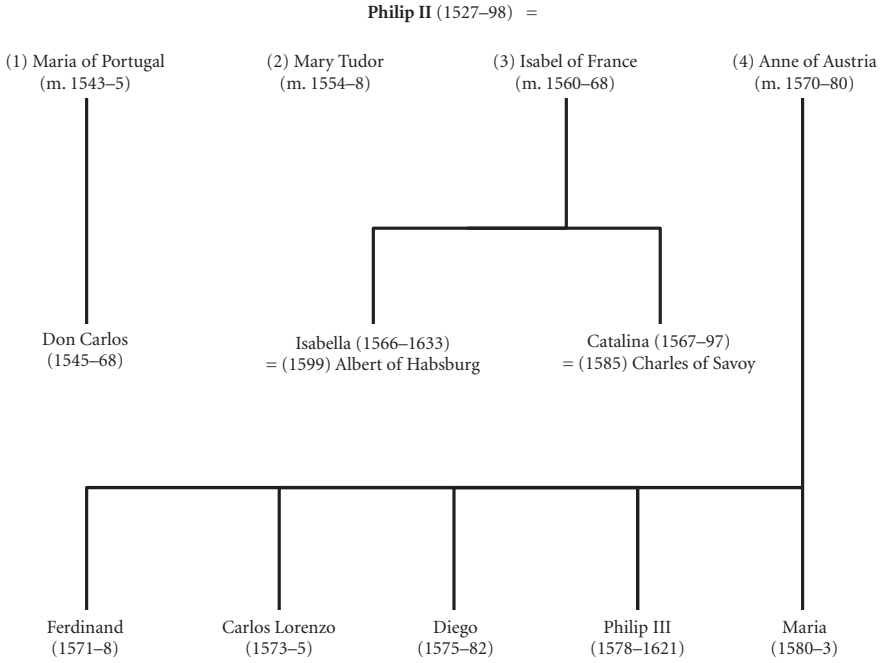
Family life – and death

A king without a family

For two decades after the death of his mother in 1539, Philip II enjoyed little family life. His father left Spain almost immediately, leaving orders that severely limited the time Philip could spend with his sisters María and Juana; and although in 1543 he married his cousin María Manuela, thanks to his father's micromanagement (chapter 2) they spent little time together before her death left him a widower, aged eighteen. Between 1548 and 1551, Philip left his siblings and his son in Spain while he spent time in northern Europe with his father, his aunt Mary of Hungary and his uncle Ferdinand. As soon as he returned to Spain his sister María, married to her cousin Maximilian, left for Austria: Philip would see her only once during the next three decades. His sister Juana also left Spain to get married in 1552 and as soon as she returned, Philip sailed for England. They would not see each other again for five years.

Philip's time in England also included little family life, because he brought with him no relatives, and for much of his time there Queen Mary's only sibling, Elizabeth, languished either in prison or under house arrest on suspicion of treason. Soon after he travelled to Brussels in 1555, his father and his aunts Mary and Eleanor left for Spain, and Philip would never see them again. Two years later, he returned to spend three months in England with his wife, but of his own relatives only his half-sister Margaret of Parma and her son Alexander Farnese visited them.

The king's family solitude ended only in 1559, when he returned to Spain and re-joined Juana and Don Carlos, met his half-brother Don John for the first time, and married Isabel of France (chapter 7). His position as head of his own family was reflected in the numerous family portraits in which the sitter holds a medallion or cameo depicting the king (see plate 29). All of these relatives – wife, siblings, children and other close relatives – provided the king



10. The family of Philip II. Although Philip married four times, and although three of his wives gave birth to children who reached adulthood, only two of them – Catalina and her half-brother Philip – became parents themselves. Philip III was the fourth of his father's sons to become prince of the Asturias.

with important emotional and practical support in dealing with the pressures and problems created by ruling a global empire.

We know little of the relations between Philip and his extended family while they were under the same roof, but their prolonged separations generated letters in which they wrote down the things they might otherwise have said in person. The first intimate correspondence to survive is the series of Philip's holograph letters to Maximilian, informing him of his activities ('Tomorrow I will start hunting . . . How I wish Your Highness could accompany me'), his disappointments ('The queen's pregnancy, which we considered so certain, has turned out to be a false hope. Your Highness and my sister manage it better than the queen and I do'), and his pleasures ('I'm very happy, because I hope to be in the Netherlands soon, and thus closer to Your Highness').[1]

Philip also maintained an intense correspondence with his sister María throughout their years of separation, especially after her husband became Holy Roman Emperor. We know that he read her letters closely because many bear his holograph annotations; and as he finalized travel arrangements for his

niece and future bride Anne to come to Spain in 1569, he tried to persuade María to come too, and 'to spend time with me and our sister' Juana 'because we are siblings who are so fond of each other' and 'I would so much like to see [you]'.[2] Even though on this occasion María disappointed her brother, she regularly promoted the interests of Spain in Germany and occasionally even spied on her husband. On one occasion she confided to a Spanish diplomat that while 'reading some letters on the emperor's desk', she noticed matters that her brother should know about, and so she leaked them. The king also shared secrets with his sister. Thus in 1570, he informed his envoy at the Imperial court:

> I am writing two letters to my sister: one about matters that she should share with the emperor – and you should forward this to her when you open this package – and the other about matters that are for her alone, without the emperor or anyone else knowing about them. I am sending this one under separate cover in an envelope addressed to you by [Secretary of State Gabriel de] Zayas, as if it came from him. You must keep this entirely secret and when you see my sister you must tell her, without anyone else knowing, that you have another letter for her, and she will tell you how and when to give it to her.[3]

Normally, the correspondence between María and Philip centred on the well-being of her children at the court of Spain (first Rudolf and Ernest, then Anne, Albert and Wenceslas), and after he married Anne in 1570 the empress gave advice to Philip, now also her son-in-law, on such domestic matters as how to avoid 'rivalries' between Anne's children and Philip's two daughters by Isabel of France. The siblings also shared memories, referring to things that their parents had said and done or looking out for those who had served them. In 1573, for example, María told Philip:

> The death of Ruy Gómez has caused me great grief because he was such a good servant of Your Highness for such a long time, and because he is the last of our mother's servants to die. I know that Your Highness will honour him after death as you did when he was alive, because you are obliged to do so, but I cannot refrain from begging Your Highness to do so also for my sake.

Shortly afterwards, María and her brother grieved over a far greater loss: the death of their sister Juana. The empress confided to Philip 'I cannot refrain from admitting to Your Highness that I find myself very much alone without her, even though we lived so far apart' (she had not seen Juana for over twenty years). That was the whole point of this intimate correspondence: it maintained the links between the king and his closest relatives even though they 'lived so far apart' for most of their adult lives.[4]

Las Descalzas Reales: a 'female space' for the royal family

In 1554 Philip ignored the strong objections of Charles V, who complained that his younger daughter Juana 'is very haughty and has led a disorderly life', and appointed her regent of Spain during his absence.[5] Juana certainly followed an unusual path. Two years into her regency she took the vows of poverty, charity and obedience required of all novices in the Jesuit Order, and became its only known female member (under the name 'Mateo Sánchez'). In 1559 she founded a convent in Madrid, soon known as Las Descalzas Reales, and after Philip made the city his capital her spacious apartments in the convent formed a 'female space' where his wife and daughters could take part in religious services and, albeit briefly, enjoy convent life. But Juana could still be 'haughty'. In 1562, when some Inquisitors interviewed her as a character witness (*testigo de abono*) in the trial of Bartolomé Carranza, and asked her (as they did with all witnesses except for the king) to state her age, 'she replied that she was fifty'. What a blatant lie: everyone knew that she was only 27! No doubt the emperor's daughter considered such personal questions impertinent.[6]

Juana also maintained an apartment in the Madrid Alcázar, and since she was considerably older than both the queen and the prince, she presided over the court whenever Philip was absent. She saw Queen Isabel almost every day and together they undertook a variety of activities, above all attending Mass and other services, and visiting nearby convents and shrines. They also organized entertainments at court. For example, the pair 'arranged a splendid masque with all their ladies-in-waiting' in honour of St Sebastian's Day, 20 January 1568, but the arrest of Don Carlos the day before led to its cancellation. The Portuguese ambassador at once visited Juana, 'and I found her distraught and in tears over the event. I consoled her as best I could, but with little success'. She wept again a few months later when Isabel died, and she looked after the two motherless infantas whom 'I love and treat like my own daughters, just as [the queen] used to do'.[7]

As long as she lived Juana held the royal family together, and whenever she fell ill the king worried. 'I have heard nothing about my sister today,' he wrote to a minister while he was away from Madrid and news reached him that Juana had been unwell. 'Arrange for Dr Vallés' – his personal physician – 'to give you each evening a report on how she was the previous night, and send it to me by courier.' When she died in 1573, Philip was distraught 'because he loved her so much' and 'he could not conceal his grief'.[8]

Because it was a royal foundation, Las Descalzas now came under Philip's direct patronage and it therefore continued to offer a refuge for the women in his family. While the king resided in Portugal between 1580 and 1583 his younger children stayed in Las Descalzas; and when in 1582 their aunt María returned to Spain she moved into her late sister's apartment, where like Juana

she welcomed the children of Philip and Anne (and thus her own grandchildren) as well as the daughters of Philip and Isabel of France.

Isabel of France, queen of Castile

Philip's third marriage lasted almost nine years – far longer than either of the preceding ones. 'Isabel of France, queen of Castile', as she styled herself, was fourteen at the time of her marriage in 1560 and throughout her teenage years she remained lazy and self-indulgent: rising and dressing at erratic hours, eating whenever she felt like it, retiring to her bed at the least excuse. She was also improvident. Philip initially assigned 80,000 ducats for the annual expenses of her household (compared with 250,000 ducats to fund his own household, chapel, guards and all officials of the central government), but though he soon increased it to 100,000 ducats, still the young queen spent far more than she received, until by 1565 her debts totalled 180,000 ducats.

Where did all this money go? Isabel seems to have bought few books; and although Philip hired Sofonisba Anguissola, the talented daughter of an Italian diplomat, to teach his wife to paint, she preferred to pose for Sofonisba (who produced and reproduced a series of spectacular portraits which the queen sent to her relatives). Nor did Isabel spend money on entertaining guests: except for other members of the royal family, relatively few gained access to the apartments where she spent most of her life. Even foreign ambassadors and visiting dignitaries could only pay their respects by prior arrangement, seldom for long, and never when the king was absent from the capital. The accounts of Isabel's household reveal just four active interests: dancing (she purchased numerous viols and flutes, an organ and three harps, and maintained a dancing master); gambling (almost every day she played cards and board games, threw dice and cast lots, often borrowing money from servants so that she could keep on playing – and losing); and, above all, plays and clothes. The queen's household accounts reveal that she arranged over thirty plays (*comedias*) between 1561 and 1568, seven of them featuring the celebrated actor Lope de Rueda (who received ten ducats in cash for each performance). At Epiphany 1565, the queen and Juana arranged entertainments that involved writers, tailors, the king's principal landscape artist, Anton van den Wyngaerde (who received 100 ducats 'for his work in painting canvases and other things needed for the play'), and two sculptors brought by the king from Italy who received 100 and 70 ducats respectively for fashioning 'massive figures' and other things for the play. The afternoon's entertainment may have cost 50,000 ducats.[9]

Expenditure on the magnificent outfits seen in portraits of the queen absorbed a substantial part of her household budget, because she hoped that they would dazzle her husband whenever he paid her a visit. These visits

became more frequent after the queen started to menstruate, and by January 1562 (according to one of her ladies-in-waiting) 'after she has said her prayers she sleeps all night with the king her husband, who never stays away without good cause'. A year later, however, the Venetian ambassador claimed that although 'in public the king always displays honour and affection' towards his wife, 'in private she gives him little satisfaction'. Indeed, he continued, Philip visited his wife 'at all hours of the night' after she had fallen asleep and then crept away to spend the night in his own apartment, feeling virtuous that he had 'done his duty'.[10] Isabel's mother, Catherine de' Medici, urged her daughter to ignore such behaviour and instead do everything she could to please Philip, but he still announced that he would visit his Aragonese subjects without her. He had not intended this: the purpose of the trip was to secure the formal recognition of Don Carlos as heir presumptive by the Cortes of Aragon, but when an accident rendered his son too ill to travel Philip decided to leave Isabel behind as well. According to Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador, the desperate queen 'tries everything she can to make the king take her along', and eventually Philip placated her with the promise that she could join him later. No sooner had he made his escape from Madrid than Pereira learned the truth: the king had no intention of summoning his wife. Instead, he issued orders that during his absence – which would last nine months – Isabel could only leave her apartment to hear Mass in the palace chapel or to dine; that she could receive no visitors after 2 p.m.; and that at 10 p.m. guards must seal off her quarters for the night. Isabel gradually realized that her importuning had led her husband to deceive her: 'She is full of regrets', Pereira reported, and sheds 'many tears because the king has abandoned her'.[11] Catherine de Medici shared her daughter's regrets and instructed her ambassador to seek an audience with her son-in-law and remind him of 'our desire to see some grandchildren' and to express the hope that he would soon 'justify our opinion that he is a good husband'. At this, for once, Philip lost his self-control and burst out laughing: he begged the ambassador to assure his mother-in-law that 'he would be at pains to keep up the good opinion he had acquired' in France.[12]

Isabel developed a new strategy in her solitude: she took Spanish lessons so that she would be better able to entertain her husband when he returned – and her progress is evident in her testament, which covered thirty-two pages, written in her own hand in perfect Castilian and including a legacy of 2,000 ducats to 'Claudio, my instructor, who taught me to read and write'.[13] The queen's strategy worked. When in May 1564 Philip returned to his wife, now eighteen, he soon proved himself a 'good husband'. The couple went to Aranjuez, eating picnics alone together in the secluded gardens, and the queen now claimed that she had no time to write to her family because the king was constantly with her, and his love (she said) filled her with happiness. By July she

was pregnant, but complications soon followed and the physicians' purges, clysters and bloodletting apparently caused a miscarriage. Eventually she recovered, although the scars of the incisions and tourniquets took months to disappear.

Throughout his wife's illness Philip remained in Madrid, spending several hours each day by her bedside. After she recovered, with her permission, he departed to inspect the progress of the Escorial, but first he asked the doctors 'if they could sleep together when he returned'. Presumably their reply was affirmative because in 1565, when the French ambassador again conveyed Catherine de' Medici's eagerness to see grandchildren, Isabel 'replied with a smile that the fault lay with her, not with the king her husband'. The queen also reported that this situation changed just a few weeks later. After complex negotiations with the French court, Philip secured the return of the relics of San Eugenio to his native city of Toledo, and in November 1565 Isabel left her apartments to venerate the saint, making a vow that if she should conceive she would name her child after him. This evidently impressed San Eugenio because nine months later, when the queen gave birth to a daughter, she told the French ambassador that 'she thought she had conceived the infanta' the night after she venerated the relics 'because she returned to her husband' afterwards and (presumably) they expressed their pious exaltation by making love.[14]

Meanwhile the French ambassador reported that (according to their servants) Philip's affection for his wife 'grows greater and greater since she became pregnant, so much so that he spends two hours with her every afternoon', and 'at all times he shows her affection in ways that he has never done before'.[15] In June, the couple moved to El Bosque de Segovia, which Philip thought would be healthier and more congenial than Madrid, and they continued to spend much time together. One night, when Isabel thought her labour had started, the king leaped up from his bed to be with her; and, although it proved a false alarm, thereafter Philip visited her as much as five times a day. When labour began, the king stayed by his wife's side, holding her hand in his and giving her a special potion sent by her mother to ease the pain at the moment of birth. They duly named the child Isabella Clara Eugenia.

Although Philip displayed immense pride and pleasure at having sired another child, he became anxious about carrying the baby to the font for baptism. According to the French ambassador, who must have got the story from the queen, Philip practised 'carrying a large doll from one side of the room to the other; but in the end he could not manage it, obliging him to let Don John carry the infanta'. Perhaps the king's anxiety arose because Isabel developed puerperal fever, just like his first wife, María Manuela, but she soon recovered and Ambassador Fourquevaux predicted that 'the queen will give us a son or daughter every year'.[16] His forecast soon came true: early in 1567 Isabel became pregnant again.

This pregnancy posed a dilemma for the king: he had promised to go to the Netherlands and restore order. First, he made plans to take her with him, since a child born in the Netherlands would count as a 'natural prince' and so perhaps appease his Dutch subjects, and later he resolved to leave her in Spain as his regent; but in the end, he decided that the continuing unrest in the Netherlands made it unsafe for him to leave Spain (chapter 8). He therefore once again stayed at his wife's side throughout her labour until she gave birth to Catalina Michaela – but this time, he did not conceal his disappointment that he had sired another daughter, not a son: he did not even remain for her baptism.

Soon afterwards, Isabel was pregnant again. She relaxed by playing at cards, quoits and dice, listening to the jokes of her buffoons, watching plays in her apartments or lunching al fresco with Juana and her ladies-in-waiting until in September 1568 she became ill. She fainted repeatedly; she had trembling fits; she ate and slept poorly and irregularly. Once again, her doctors applied clysters and drew blood while the king stayed by her side, holding her hand, soothing and comforting her. They heard Mass together for the last time on 3 October 1568. Isabel had always tried to influence her husband in matters that affected France – persuading Philip to grant audiences to the French ambassador when he refused to see all the rest; discussing with him affairs on which her mother wanted support; occasionally leaking confidential information to French diplomats – and now, as she felt her life ebbing away, Isabel asked her husband to promise that he would continue to support her brother, the king of France. After he had done so, she asked him 'to give his word to protect and favour all her servants, especially those from France. And the king gave his word that he would do as she had asked.' Finally she told Philip that, just as throughout her life she had prayed that God would grant him a long life, she would continue to do the same in heaven. At this point Philip broke down: moved by the fact 'that the queen, being in so much pain and with such mortal ailments, should speak such words with so much spirit, he could not hold back the tears that fell'. A few hours later Isabel gave birth to another girl. They both died a few hours later.[17]

Juana supervised the queen's burial in Las Descalzas Reales, where she had found solace, while the king moved into a monastery to mourn. For over two weeks he refused to see papers, ministers or ambassadors, joining the monks as they said continuous Masses for the soul of his late wife; and when he emerged, he went straight to the Escorial for a further period of seclusion. On Christmas Eve 1568, he granted an audience to the French ambassador, who read out a letter of condolence from Catherine de' Medici at which, the ambassador reported, the king wept again. Six months later he told his former mother-in-law that Isabel's two young daughters were 'the only consolation I have left, since Our Lord deprived me of the company of their mother.'[18]

Family life again

Lacking both a male heir and a wife Philip could not avoid remarrying, and he soon arranged with his sister María to wed Anne, her oldest daughter; but then Pius V refused to grant the necessary dispensation. In a holograph letter, the pope stated that 'although some of our predecessors have granted dispensations in similar cases' of consanguinity, they had erred: according to Pius, no pope had the power to override the biblical prohibition on marriages between uncle and niece. Moreover, the pope added pointedly, 'we have already seen the unfortunate consequences of these marriages of the first degree' – an unsubtle reference to the mental instability that had recently led the king to imprison his son and heir, Don Carlos.[19] Philip, too, felt little enthusiasm for the marriage. In a long holograph letter to the duke of Alba he expressed much the same sentiments as he had done a decade before, when he feared he would have to wed Elizabeth Tudor (chapter 7). 'Marriage does nothing to make me happy, especially now,' he grumbled. 'How I wish I could avoid it . . . I feel very tired and weak, and I find pleasure in nothing. It is better to be alone at such times. But, as I have said, I am prepared to sacrifice myself to duty.'[20] He therefore blackmailed the pope – threatening to forsake the Holy League against the Ottoman sultan desired by Pius unless he got the dispensation – and in November 1570, with the pope's reluctant blessing, aged 43, he married his 21-year-old niece.

The couple evidently experienced some problems at first, because three months after the marriage Don Diego de Córdoba (a courtier who seemed to know everything that happened in his master's bedroom) rejoiced that at last the king and queen were spending more time together. 'May God watch over them, so that we may soon see the fruit we desire. They are together every night. The things that sometimes prevented this are forgotten, thanks be to God and to the queen' – although, he added, 'it's a pity they spend so few hours in bed'. Nevertheless, in late April 1571 another courtier reported gleefully, 'the queen has not had her period since 20 March'. When Philip took his family to Aranjuez, he insisted that the pregnant queen travel in a litter or a special chair; and when he went to the Escorial he insisted that Anne stay in the Madrid Alcázar – although he worried that 'The queen's apartment will be hot, at least at night, and so it would be better if she sleeps – but only sleeps – in my room, so that she will be cool at night'. In July, he fretted that 'if the queen wants to leave [the palace], remind her that she should be carried in a chair so that she does not fall again'. As the queen's 'due date' approached, whenever he left Madrid Philip ordered her majordomo, the marquis of Ladrada, to 'tell me as soon as she feels contractions, so that I can get there in time for the birth'. In the event, he sat beside his wife on 3 December 1571 as she gave birth to his son

and heir, Fernando, making the king, according to an observer at court, 'the happiest man you have ever seen'.[21]

For several days, according to the diary of his private secretary, the king transacted no official business; and when an ambassador arrived to present his congratulations, he found the proud father wearing a black silk jacket and silver-coloured velvet breeches and hose, with a cloak of damask trimmed with fur. A few days later, Philip took centre stage in the procession from the Madrid Alcázar to the adjacent church of San Gil for the baptism of his son by Cardinal Espinosa, watched by a host of grandees and the entire diplomatic corps (see plate 30). Philip's euphoria led him to pardon a number of criminals 'in thanks to Our Lord for the birth of a son and for our naval victory' (the battle of Lepanto). He also commissioned a massive painting from Titian that linked the two events: Philip's court painter Alonso Sánchez Coello sent instructions and sketches, approved by the king, and *The Offering of Philip II* duly emphasized the direct and special relationship between the king of heaven and the king of Spain, as well as the glorious future that awaited Prince Fernando, whom Titian placed at the centre of his composition (see plate 31).[22]

A large family now surrounded the king. Anne not only gave birth to seven children during the next ten years: she also brought with her to Spain two of her younger brothers, Albert and Wenceslas, and became a 'second mother' to her stepdaughters Isabella Clara Eugenia and Catalina. Throughout the 1570s, the royal family followed much the same routine. The king, his wife, children and nephews spent most of the winter together at the Madrid Alcázar and their summers at the Escorial, with visits to Aranjuez in spring and El Pardo in autumn. Occasionally, Philip visited one of his country estates alone, but (according to a Venetian ambassador) whenever they were under the same roof,

> His Majesty visits the queen three times a day: in the morning before hearing Mass; during the day before he starts work; and at night as they prepare to sleep. They have two low beds, about one foot apart, but because a curtain encloses them they look like one bed. The king loves his wife most tenderly and seldom leaves her side.[23]

When he did 'leave her side', Philip and Anne seem to have exchanged letters once or twice a week (Anne was fluent in Spanish). For example, in July 1572 Ladrada told Philip that 'tonight the queen gave me this letter for Your Majesty' and forwarded it to the Escorial. Two days later Philip wrote, 'Here is the reply, which I was unable to write until this morning because I arrived [here] rather tired, and had business to transact.' On another occasion Philip told Ladrada that he had read 'the queen's letter in reply to mine' and instructed the majordomo 'to give the queen the letter enclosed with this one'.[24] The king also wanted regular reports

concerning the health of his family. 'Inform me every day of the health of the queen and the prince,' he told Ladrada when he left Madrid for the Escorial two weeks after Fernando's birth; and nine months later, he gave orders 'to send me a courier in the evening every day that I am away' – adding, 'also find out what the doctors say about my sister and my nephews and tell them to write to me'.[25]

Whenever the prince's health deteriorated, the king worried. In October 1572, Ladrada sent a pessimistic medical report to the Escorial at 7.30 in the evening. The following day, the king wrote that 'the courier arrived last night after midnight, an hour after I had gone to sleep, and so it rather depressed me; but that cannot be avoided when there is due cause, as now. And although it did not keep me awake for long, I slept badly afterwards.' When Ladrada sent a better report two days later, the king replied 'It was very good to send me this news, which I think will allow me to recover the sleep that I lost the other night.'[26] Philip worried about his daughters, too. He wanted them to spend time outside – 'It seems to His Majesty that the infantas should go outside sometimes, so that they can get some fresh air, because no plant can grow without it' – and to live healthily. Ladrada must make sure that his daughters 'get up early and do some exercises, and for this and other reasons it would be better if they went to bed early'. Philip also fretted that the infantas spent too much time reading 'books of chivalry' and he gave orders that 'they should read more books of devotions'.[27]

On other occasions, Philip seems to have been less attentive to his children. Although he provided his sons with toy soldiers and encouraged his daughters to keep songbirds in a cage, as he had done himself forty years before, he seldom spent 'quality time' with them until they were teenagers. Thus in July 1575, when Philip was struggling to solve a financial crisis, Prince Fernando (now three) fell seriously ill and his doctors despaired over the best remedy. The king gave advice on the best food for his ailing son – omelettes, although 'I'm not sure whether the omelette should contain bacon, but if he likes it I see no reason not to include it, provided that in return he agrees to eat it' – and he demanded frequent reports on how well his son ate and slept. Thus far, the model father; but when the doctors reported the next day that the prince refused to eat the omelettes and asked the king to come in person to provide encouragement, Philip refused: 'He is not old enough to derive any benefit from a visit by me' because 'at his age, I don't think he would pay much attention to what I say about his food. If fear might influence him, he would fear his governess more than me.'[28]

Perhaps, however, the king himself feared the encounter, and the possibility of watching his heir die, because two weeks earlier another of his sons, Carlos Lorenzo, not quite two years old, had sickened and died. Philip gloomily sent the 'tiny body' to be interred at the Escorial beside his other deceased offspring, and he wrote a remarkable lament to one of his leading treasury advisers:

> Consider my reasons to feel sad. I am forty-eight years old, with an heir who is just three, and my finances are in a mess . . . Besides, what sort of old age will I have . . . when I fear each day will be my last, and do not know how to find the resources to maintain all the things that are so necessary?[29]

This time, the prince recovered his health, and three days after Carlos Lorenzo's death the queen gave birth to her third son, Diego; but the anxieties soon recommenced. In 1577, Diego fell sick. According to his majordomo: 'This is particularly worrying now, because we are about to wean him. I would really like Your Majesties to see him first, because he is the most beautiful child, plump and strong and healthy.'[30] Although Diego survived, the following year brought a series of cruel blows to Philip's family circle: in August 1578 his nephew Sebastian, king of Portugal perished in battle; in September his nephew Wenceslas, Anne's brother, died; in October, news arrived of the death of the king's own brother, Don John, in the Netherlands; and the next day Prince Fernando died in Madrid. Philip was particularly affected by the loss of his heir; he wept, refused to eat, and secluded himself in a convent to mourn. In 1580, further blows rained down: the king and queen took Diego (now heir apparent) Isabella and Catalina to Estremadura, where in October an influenza epidemic killed the queen just before her 31st birthday (chapter 15).

The lonely father

Immediately after Anne's death, although Philip went on to Portugal he sent the prince and his daughters back to Madrid to join their younger siblings Philip (born in 1578) and María (born earlier that year). Until his return to Madrid in March 1583, his only contact with them was by letter: throughout their separation, his teenage daughters wrote regularly to their father, and almost every Monday he sat down with their latest letters in front of him to compose a reply. When Catalina left Spain after her marriage to Duke Charles Emmanuel of Savoy she took with her over thirty of these letters addressed to 'the infantas, my daughters', and she would later receive (and carefully preserve) over a hundred more from her father. The survival of these letters – a happy contrast with the fate of the letters he wrote to each of his wives, all of which were burned – offers a unique insight into the king's ability to love.

Some aspects of the correspondence suggest indifference. On the one hand, Philip never addressed his daughters by name (instead referring to Isabella as 'you, the elder' and to Catalina as 'you, the younger'); and on the other, he told them that he destroyed their letters after he had replied to them 'to avoid having more papers than necessary'.[31] This may seem insensitive, because most absent fathers would have kept these precious souvenirs of their children, but Philip's

own letters were full of love and affection. In March 1582 he wrote, 'you must both have grown a lot, especially you, the younger one. If you have a tape measure, let me know how much you have grown since I last saw you', adding 'and also measure your brother, because I would like to see his height – although I would like even more to see you all'. The infantas evidently took their father literally and sent him portraits, because three months later Philip blurted out 'I want to see all of you, and not just portraits of you!'[32] After the king returned to Castile in 1583 he spent a great deal of time with his daughters. He regularly played cards and dice with them for money (the accounts of the infantas' household frequently record money issued 'to play with the king our lord') and sometimes they ate their meals together (see plate 32). When Catalina sailed away to Italy with her new husband in 1585, the king became tongue-tied – 'I could not take my leave of you and the duke as I wanted to do, or tell you some of things I was thinking' – so he climbed a nearby church tower in order to catch a last glimpse of their galley, only to be disappointed again: 'We saw a lot of sea, but you were no longer to be seen.' So he sat down to write his inner thoughts in a letter, which he sent together with one from Catalina's sister Isabella 'to reach you in the port of Rosas'. Yet again he was disappointed: the courier could not catch up with the galley and so brought the letters back. A week later the king wrote once more 'so that you will see that we do not fail to write to you, or to miss you, which is the way we feel right now'.[33]

He was thrilled to receive the first letters that Catalina wrote when she reached Savoy, announcing a safe and rapid crossing, and told her with surprising passion: 'I don't know whether it's because I love you so much that I feel this way, but I think the duke and I will be in competition to see who loves you more'. He commented on every point in her letters before sighing 'your sister and I cannot help thinking about you all the time, and we miss you a lot'. A year later the king let slip to Catalina that he had just spent two weeks at the Escorial without 'your siblings' so that 'I have felt very much on my own, which also made me miss you even more'; and in 1588, in the midst of micromanaging the invasion of England, he revealed that he had been counting the days since Catalina left: 'Yesterday marked three years since you sailed away, and since I saw you, which has made me feel very lonely; and I know that is because you love me and I love you.'[34]

Occasionally the king also mentioned to his daughters how much he missed 'your two mothers' (as he called Isabel of France, whom they would not remember, and Anne of Austria, who had raised them). While writing to them in 1582, on the eve of the second anniversary of Anne's death, although 'it is very late and I am tired' Philip added a moving postscript that he knew the girls would understand: 'I shall remember that night, even if I live a thousand years.' On the next anniversary, Anne was again on his mind when he visited El

Bosque de Segovia alone. 'God alone knows how lonely I feel,' he wrote to his daughters sadly, 'and especially today.'[35]

The king could also be surprisingly playful in his letters. In March 1582, writing from Portugal, he described in detail how much he had enjoyed a trip down the river Tagus, 'seeing all the ships there were today in the river . . . It was really something worth seeing, and we had a wonderful day. I tell you this,' he continued (and we can imagine him smiling as he wrote), 'to repay you for the envy I felt on reading about your visit to the Pardo and the Escorial.' A few months earlier he had teased his daughters by pretending that he could not remember the ages of their younger siblings:

> They tell me that your little brother [Philip] has lost a tooth. It seems to me that this is rather late, because (as you will remember) today marks three years since he was baptized – although I'm not quite sure if it is two years or three . . . I'm also not quite sure how old your older brother will be in July: I think he will turn six. Please tell me the truth.[36]

Naturally the king knew the ages of his sons perfectly well (Diego was indeed six and Philip three) but, like other parents trying to persuade their taciturn teenage children to write them letters, he no doubt realized that feigning ignorance was a good way to get results.

On occasion the king reproached his daughters, for example when he heard that they had misbehaved – 'you both need to be sure to do everything [your governess] tells you' – or when their letters contained errors. 'You, the older one, wrote that your brother is gaining fame for his prowess [with the crossbow], but I think you meant your sister . . . and you also omitted a word. You must have written the letter in a hurry' – a crushing rebuke for a fifteen-year-old girl who desperately missed her father. Normally, however, Philip's letters were full of praise. He was delighted when his daughters encouraged young Diego to dance, and he studied with pleasure his letter and 'a picture of a horse which seems to me better than he usually manages'. He promised to send a picture book as a reward. Later he sent his son some letters of the alphabet to colour in and announced that he had more to send when they were required.[37]

It was not to be: Diego died the following month of smallpox, aged seven – the third heir to perish in Philip's lifetime. 'It is a terrible blow,' he wrote to one of his ministers, 'coming so soon after all the other [deaths]; but I praise God for everything He has done, submit myself to His divine will, and pray that He will be satisfied with this sacrifice.'[38] The death of Diego forced the king to change his plans. He had hoped to leave Portugal and spend Christmas 1582 with his family in Spain; but now he had to wait until the Portuguese Cortes could assemble and swear allegiance to his last surviving son, the future

Philip III, as his heir. Once that ceremony had been accomplished, the king left Lisbon and finally reached the Escorial in March 1583. After attending a service, 'His Majesty visited the queen's apartments', which must have been a bitter moment, and then 'climbed up to the dome of the church' and explored other additions built since his departure. He also received the body of María, the youngest of his children who (like Diego) had died while he was in Portugal, which also 'affected him as a father so much that grief prevented him from doing anything else'. He buried her beside the bodies of five of his other children.[39]

A fifth bride for the king?

Amid all these losses, Philip found some consolation in the arrival of his sister María, now a widow, and her youngest child, Margarita. They arrived in Madrid from Austria in March 1582, and after a short rest in Las Descalzas, they set out for Portugal. Philip could not disguise his excitement at their impending arrival. He told his daughters 'I am very envious of you' because 'when you get this letter you will already have seen my sister'. The girls must write at once to tell him 'if she is fat or thin, and if we still look somewhat alike as we used to do. I am sure she does not look as old as I do.' Philip set out to meet his sister near the Portuguese frontier and, he told his daughters, 'I got out of the carriage quickly and kissed her hands before she could get out of hers' (one of the few times Philip seems to have done anything 'quickly'). Thereafter they travelled in the same carriage and 'you can imagine how much she and I enjoyed seeing each other, since we had not done so for twenty-six years, and only twice in the past thirty-four years, and both times for only a few days'.[40]

Philip was also happy to meet his young niece Margarita. The death of Diego, leaving Philip once more with only one son, Prince Philip, led his ministers in Madrid to press for remarriage, and their thoughts turned to Margarita. The empress was horrified because, as she told Imperial Ambassador Hans Khevenhüller, 'she had already decided to place her daughter as a nun in the convent of Las Descalzas'. Khevenhüller suavely reminded María that 'she must not act precipitately in something that could not later be changed', adding that 'now that King Philip has made clear that he wishes to marry' Margarita, the empress 'could not in good conscience let her daughter become a nun'. Furthermore, Khevenhüller noted, 'His Majesty does not wish to slight his own family and seek a foreign bride' – that is: Philip would only marry another Habsburg, and Margarita was currently the only one available.[41]

As the pressure to marry intensified, Margarita composed a remarkable letter to her uncle. She began by stating that since 'everyone is on the side of Your Majesty, and no one on mine, I have turned to God, entrusting this matter to Him'. On two grounds, she wrote, 'I find it impossible to marry': first,

'because I have taken a vow to become a nun, and given God my word that I will become His bride'. She asked rhetorically: 'I ask Your Majesty to tell me: having given my word to the King of Heaven, would it be right for me to renege in order to marry a king on this earth?' Margarita concluded with a second consideration, carefully calculated to appeal to Philip's Providential vision. Given all that the king did for God, she argued, He would surely reciprocate, 'giving you a long life, success in your affairs, and the survival of the children He has given you'. Moreover,

> Although the prince, may God preserve him, is still young and is so sickly and in poor health, I will take responsibility before God for his well-being. And Your Majesty can be sure of one thing: that if Your Majesty consents to leave to God his bride, his Margarita, and does not break such firm bonds, God will grant the prince good health as he grows up, and a numerous progeny when he marries.[42]

This was spiritual blackmail worthy of Philip himself, and in autumn 1584 the king finally accepted defeat, attending a simple ceremony with his daughters in Las Descalzas at which he apparently wept as Margarita cut off her hair and the empress 'dressed her in a nun's habit'.[43]

Ambassador Khevenhüller by contrast breathed a huge sigh of relief: he had evidently feared that the physical demands of another teenage bride would exhaust Margarita's 58-year-old uncle: 'His Majesty,' he told María, 'has prudently decided to marry neither the Infanta nor anyone else, because according to the advice of his doctors, His Majesty might live several years more if he remains single, but if he marries they do not give him one more year.'[44] Instead, Margarita remained at Las Descalzas as a nun until her death almost fifty years later, no doubt watching with satisfaction as Prince Philip grew up, married and sired five healthy children (see plate 33).

Although the Empress María also spent the rest of her life in Las Descalzas, she kept in regular touch with her brother. Sometimes she joined him at the Escorial and Aranjuez, and he sometimes visited her in her apartments at the convent. At other times, the siblings used Khevenhüller as an intermediary. He claimed that the empress became so involved not only in 'foreign affairs but also in the most intimate family matters' that 'every day I had to go and consult His Majesty about them, taking and receiving notes from Las Descalzas to wherever the king might be'.[45] In addition, after her brother's death she helped his children (some of them, of course, also her grandchildren) to adjust. Thus in October 1598, the new king Philip III visited her every day; while Isabella Clara Eugenia lived with her aunt and Margarita for eight months until she married another of María's children, Archduke Albert (chapter 19).

Death and debts

Philip also boasted a sizeable cohort of illegitimate relatives, and although he knew few of them personally he sometimes intervened decisively in their lives. Each of them bore either the style 'of Aragon' (descendants of his great-grandfather, Ferdinand the Catholic) or 'of Austria' (descendants of his great-grandfather Maximilian and his father Charles V). The former included Hernando de Aragón, archbishop of Zaragoza, who served Philip as viceroy of Aragon until his death in 1575, and Francisco de Borja, an intimate adviser of both Philip and his sister Juana until his death in 1572: both, as Philip and Juana, were great-grandchildren of Ferdinand. Among members of the other branch of the family, Philip took a personal interest in 'el Señor Maximiliano de Austria', illegitimate son of one of the twelve illegitimate sons of Emperor Maximilian, whom Philip named abbot of Alcalá el Real and later bishop of Cádiz.

Charles V had sired two illegitimate daughters, both born in 1522. Philip was unaware of the existence of the first, Doña Tadea de la Penna, until he received a letter from her in 1560. She announced that she was a nun in Rome and complained that 'many lay and religious people know (much against my will)' her parentage. She asked her half-brother to recognize 'that I, although most unworthy, am the daughter' of the emperor, and either grant her a pension payable in Rome or else bring her to Spain.[46] Although the king's reply has apparently not survived, it seems likely that he left his half-sister in her convent. Margaret of Austria, born in the Netherlands and raised by her aunt Mary of Hungary, enjoyed a very different destiny. Charles recognized her as his daughter and married her to the duke of Parma, and between 1557 and 1559 she spent much time with Philip in both England and the Netherlands. Although the two never saw each other again after the king left for Spain, they exchanged many letters, especially when Margaret served as regent in the Netherlands. Her son Alexander spent many years at the court of Spain before fighting at the side of Don John first in the Mediterranean and later in the Netherlands, where he became governor-general in 1578. Philip always showed him great affection. After both Alexander's parents died in 1586, the king wrote his nephew a warm letter of condolence: 'You must bear this like a good Christian,' he wrote, 'and you must also take care of yourself', adding in his own hand: 'Although you have lost both of your parents almost at the same time, I am always here in their place.'[47]

At first, Philip also showed great affection for Charles's other son, 'my brother Don John'. In 1559 he made him a knight of the Golden Fleece and set up a separate household for him (chapter 7), and in 1568 he named him captain-general first of the Mediterranean fleet and later of the royal forces fighting to suppress the revolt of the Alpujarras. In 1570 he agreed to allow the

pope to name Don John commander of the Holy League against the Turks. Although his brother disobeyed the king for the first time in 1565, when he fled from court to participate in the relief of Malta, three years later he revealed the plans of Don Carlos to flee to Germany (chapter 10).

It is hard to imagine the meteoric career of Don John. Until 1559, when he was twelve, only four or five people knew his true identity, and for another decade his name was known only in the court of Spain; but his great victory at Lepanto, when he was 24, turned him into an international superstar and also a power at court. Urged on by some of his followers, Don John now dreamed of becoming a king himself, first of Tunis and then of England, but Philip thwarted him, insisting that his brother must strive only to achieve the goals of the Spanish Monarchy. Sometimes Don John refused: in 1575, although Philip had ordered him to remain in Lombardy, as soon as he learned that the Ottoman fleet threatened Tunis, he set out at the head of the king's fleet to fight another battle; and the following year he disobeyed a royal order to travel directly from Italy to the Netherlands, and instead went to Spain. Soon after he arrived in the Low Countries, he did everything he could to leave them, first for England and later for Spain (chapter 13). Such defiance eventually irritated the king so much that in October 1578 he decided to recall his brother. Only death allowed Philip to become reconciled with Don John: he buried him in the Escorial, near to their father – the only illegitimate member of the House of Austria to be honoured in this way.

Philip showed the same ambiguity towards both the daughters sired by his brother. The older, Ana, was the love child of Don John and Doña María de Mendoza, a relative of the princess of Éboli, in whose palace at Pastrana she was born in 1568. Shortly after the death of her mother in 1572, Ana entered a convent; and in 1578, soon after her father's death, the king granted her the same privileges enjoyed by other nuns from the royal family, including the right to call herself 'Ana of Austria'. She lost everything in 1594 when a 'man named Gabriel de Espinosa came' to the convent claiming to be her cousin King Sebastian, miraculously preserved from death after his defeat in Africa, 'and he persuaded me to believe him'. She began to call Espinosa 'my Lord' and made plans to marry him, after which they would travel to Lisbon and claim their rightful status as king and queen of Portugal. After prolonged investigation, Philip ordered the execution of Espinosa and others involved in the deception, and the transfer of Ana to solitary confinement in another convent, where she would remain until after the king's death (see plate 34).[48]

Philip also intervened directly in the upbringing of the other daughter left by his brother: Juana of Austria, conceived with a noblewoman of Naples in 1573. Don John initially entrusted her to his half-sister Margaret of Parma, and when he died, Margaret begged her brother to bring Juana to Spain 'to be raised

by the queen'. But Philip 'preferred another course, believing that it would be better to deposit her in the convent of Santa Clara in Naples . . . intending that when she reached a suitable age she would wish to remain there as a nun'.[49] Ten years later, a nephew of Sixtus V expressed the desire to marry Juana, and Philip (welcoming the opportunity to please the pope) gave his blessing; but the death of Sixtus ended the discussion. Although she received other proposals of marriage, Juana would remain confined in the convent of Santa Clara in Naples for some years after Philip's death.

Philip had one more family obligation: paying the debts left by his father and other deceased relatives. The Archivo General of Simancas conserves fifty-two huge bundles of desperate requests from hundreds of former servants of the emperor for payment of salary arrears or reimbursement of expenses incurred in Charles's service. In 1559 the king allocated 80,000 ducats to be spent by the executors of the emperor's testament in paying debts; but it soon emerged that Charles owed far more – not only to his own servants but also to the creditors of his own father and grandparents, 'because, after I took the oath as king of Castile and Aragon, I fought great wars and incurred unavoidable expenses'. In 1579, a committee of ministers appointed to solve this embarrassing problem asked Philip to provide funds to pay off the creditors of his deceased relatives. The king dictated a dismissive reply: 'To be sure, I would be very happy if this could be done at once, but pending matters are so numerous and the funds available for them so little; so you can remind me about this later.' On reading this response, the king apparently realized just how heartless it sounded, because he added in his own hand: 'I mean, in future tell me what would be necessary each year to cover the expenses detailed here.'[50]

The king was similarly lax in discharging the debts of his son Don Carlos. He silently appropriated some of the late prince's most valuable possessions, but refused to pay a suitable amount to the estate to help discharge the prince's debts. When in 1571 'His Majesty wished to send a jewel to the queen of Scotland', Mary Stuart, instead of sending her one from his own collection he chose one from 'those that belonged to the prince'; and six years later he still had not parted with a 'a golden crucifix' and a Calvary 'that Pompeo Leone, my sculptor, made for the said prince', which Don Carlos had bequeathed to a Madrid convent.[51] This unusual behaviour reflected the unusual relationship between Philip and his oldest son.

CHAPTER TEN

The enigma of Don Carlos

The most famous (or infamous) and dramatic episode in the life of Philip II occurred just before midnight on 18 January 1568 when the king led a small group of courtiers through the darkened corridors of the Madrid Alcázar to arrest and imprison his son and heir, Don Carlos. Six months later, while still in confinement, the prince died – according to the English ambassador John Man, 'Not without great suspyton, as is reported, *of a taste*': that is, poisoned on the orders of his father.[1]

Over a hundred versions of this episode have been published, starting with two tracts that appeared in the Low Countries in 1581. First and better known, William of Orange's polemical *Apology* asserted that Philip 'unnaturally murdered his own child and heir'. The second tract, *Diogenes*, an anonymous appeal in verse to the king of France to support the Dutch struggle against the tyranny of Philip, was far shorter but it made an accusation that would enjoy a long life: that Don Carlos had fallen in love with his stepmother Isabel of France and that Philip had murdered both of them when he found out.[2] These accusations recurred in César de Saint-Réal's historical novel *Don Carlos* (1672), in Friedrich Schiller's play *Don Karlos* of 1787, and in Giuseppe's Verdi's opera *Don Carlo*, first performed in 1867. Most of these versions relied on indirect sources – often the same indirect sources: thus Verdi's libretto drew upon Schiller's play, which was in turn based on Saint-Réal, who incorporated the unsubstantiated allegations of Orange's *Apologie* and *Diogenes*.

The events of 18 January 1568 and their antecedents

All this lay in the future. In 1568, Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador and Ruy Gómez's uncle, was the first outsider to learn of the dramatic acts – 'at 2 a.m. [on the 19th] I was informed of what had happened' – and was

also the first to write down what he heard. He stated that the king celebrated Christmas 1567 with the monks and a few courtiers at the Escorial, returning to the Madrid Alcázar on the night of 16 January 1568. The following day, a Sunday, Pereira noted, the king attended Mass accompanied by his son. He spent the whole of 18 January 'in bed, saying that he felt unwell' until at some point Philip summoned four of his leading councillors, including Ruy Gómez. When they assembled, the king

> told them that the affairs of the prince had become so disordered that it was necessary to act, both as a father and as a Christian, and for the good of these kingdoms; and that he had not summoned them to give him their opinions on the matter, because he had decided what he must do, but rather to accompany him and carry out his orders.[3]

The king had already shared his plan with six other people. The two gentlemen of the prince's bedchamber on duty that night received orders to leave the door to his apartment unlocked, to extinguish all lights and to remove all weapons and all guards; while four other courtiers (two of them armed with hammers and nails) were told to stand by to receive further orders.

At 11 p.m. Philip put on a coat of mail and his helmet and led his posse stealthily through the Alcázar 'without torches or candles to the apartment of the prince, who was in bed'. He 'immediately seized the sword that [his son] kept by his bed and the loaded arquebus that he always kept close to him'. Awaking to find armed men surrounding him, Don Carlos exclaimed in alarm: 'What does Your Majesty want? What time is it? Does Your Majesty want to kill or arrest me?' 'Neither, prince,' Philip replied as his entourage nailed the windows shut. At this, the prince 'leaped out of bed and apparently wanted to throw himself in the fire'. When a courtier restrained him he cried out: 'Does Your Majesty want to tie me down like a madman? I am not mad, just desperate.' Philip replied, 'phlegmatically, as usual: "Calm yourself, prince, and get into bed. What we are doing is for your own good." ' The king then 'collected all the papers in the prince's writing desks', together with 30,000 ducats in cash found there, and departed. He left two courtiers in the prince's bedchamber while the rest of the party stood guard outside.[4]

These dramatic events caused a sensation. The next day, Pereira noted that 'the whole country is shocked and amazed'; and a week later one of Philip's Netherlands ministers still found the new situation 'totally unexpected and most remarkable'. But some observers now realized that the arrest was not, after all, 'totally unexpected': they had missed at least one important clue. French ambassador Fourquevaux recalled that

> on the 13th of this month the king ordered the churches and monasteries of this city to say prayers at all canonical hours and at Mass, asking God to inspire and guide him on a certain deliberation and plan that he had formed in his heart. This provided the gossip-mongers [*speculatifs*] of this court with much to talk about – but I never thought it concerned the prince.[5]

Fourquevaux nevertheless overlooked one important circumstance: if Philip had indeed decided the fate of his son that far in advance, it would have been an act of stunning hypocrisy to go to Mass with him on the day before the arrest, thus giving Don Carlos a false sense of security. One must wonder why, if the king had made up his mind at the Escorial on 13 January, he waited five days to act.

Explanations

The diplomatic corps in Madrid could not explain this either. 'What the true cause might be, I cannot say,' sighed the Tuscan ambassador, adding: 'Many affirm that His Majesty will provide an account not only to his subjects but to all Christian princes.' He was right. Philip spent much of 19 January in meetings with different groups of councillors, whom he reassured that he had acted 'for reasons that reflected the needs of his service and the well-being of these kingdoms, which he would explain to them in due course'. He also wrote or dictated letters that apprised his principal vassals and allies of his actions.[6] In each case, Philip emphasized that he had arrested the prince only on account of his 'natural and unique temperament' and not 'for some offence or wrong he had done to our person, nor anything like it', and he promised to supply further detail in due course (according to one source 'the king said he would give forty causes and reasons that had compelled him to make the said arrest'). Until then he forbade further discussion, especially in the form of sermons: all prelates and generals of the religious orders received an injunction that the matter must not be mentioned from the pulpit.[7]

At this stage, Philip supplied further details only to his closest Habsburg relatives. He revealed most to his aunt Catherine, queen dowager of Portugal, both because as the only surviving sibling of Charles V she was the senior member of his family, and because as mother of his first wife, María Manuela, she was also Don Carlos's grandmother. Philip began his long holograph letter on 20 January by reminding his aunt that he had already warned her 'of the lifestyle and habits of the prince my son' together with the 'numerous and weighty arguments and evidence' that proved 'the unavoidable necessity to find a remedy'. His 'paternal love', he continued, 'restrained him, so he had sought

and used all the means, remedies and ways I could find to avoid reaching this point'. But now

> the prince's condition has deteriorated so far and reached such a state that, in order to discharge the obligation that as a Christian prince I have towards God and towards the kingdoms and dominions that He has chosen to place in my charge, I could not avoid making a change to his situation, arresting and imprisoning him.

Philip also revealed to Catherine (and, at this stage, apparently only to her) that this would not be a temporary step:

> My decision does not derive from any crime, disobedience or disrespect, nor does it aim to punish, because although there was plenty of evidence for that, it could have waited the proper time and place. Nor is this a means to an end, hoping that in this way to reform his excesses and disorders. The problem has another root and origin that neither time nor treatment can solve.[8]

Philip disbanded his son's household and moved him to a tower in the Madrid Alcázar in a windowless apartment that measured 'thirty square feet' – about the same size as that of Bartolomé Carranza after his arrest (an ominous coincidence, noted by many) – where six trusted courtiers kept the prince isolated under strict guard both night and day. According to the Imperial ambassador in early February, 'Everyone keeps quiet about the prince as if he were dead'; and two months later, according to his Tuscan colleague, 'no one pays attention now to the prince of Spain, as if he had never been born, and his life in custody is the same as on the first day, with no prospect that he can speak a single word' to the world outside.[9]

Not surprisingly such drastic and dramatic measures, combined with Philip's refusal to provide a detailed explanation, gave rise to a wide range of reactions. In Lisbon, Queen Catherine proposed to come and see the prince in person 'to look after him as a mother', and Philip had to send a special messenger to dissuade her.[10] In Vienna, María and Maximilian protested to Philip about the lack of a full explanation when news arrived that Don Carlos had taken Easter communion, which suggested that he was again 'normal', forcing Philip to sit down and 'open my heart to Your Highnesses'. In what must have been a most painful exercise, he provided the only surviving analysis of his innermost thoughts on 'the nature' and 'the defects' of his son. He began by explaining that at first 'neither I nor those who are with the prince were satisfied that he was in a suitable state' to receive communion; but 'since it seemed to his

confessor that it was a more pious and healthy course to proceed, we deferred to him, and so he received it'. Philip conceded that everything had gone well at the Mass but, he continued,

> Your Highnesses must realize that this is something that has phases, so that at some times there is more serenity than at others; and that it is one thing to deal with the prince's defects as they affect government and public affairs, and another as they affect personal actions and affairs, and private life – because it may well be that what could be disastrous in one could be excused and allowed in the other.

Therefore, Philip concluded sadly, 'this single example [communion] does not change the defects of understanding that God, for my sins, has allowed in my son.'[11]

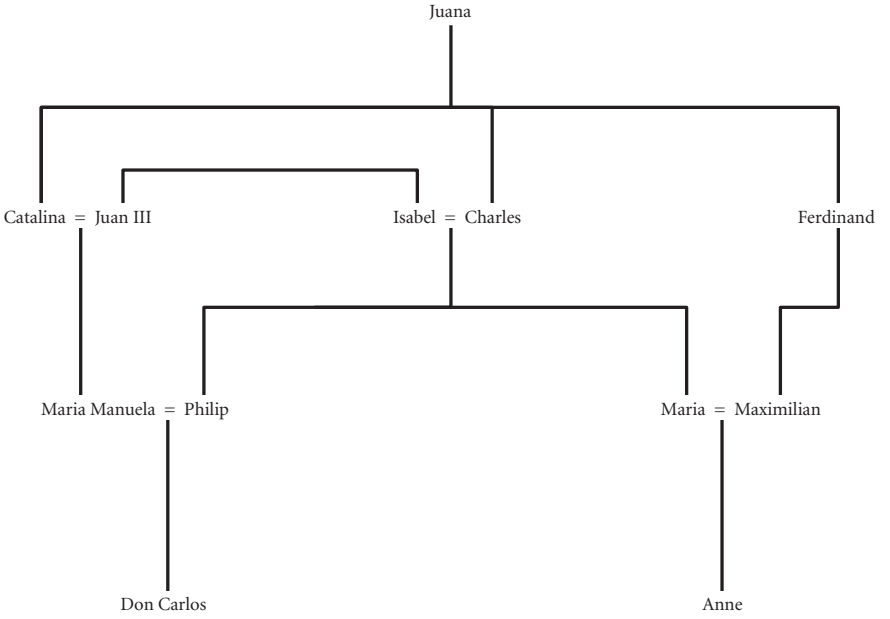
'The defects of understanding'

Philip's effort to 'open his heart' to his closest relatives revealed a commendably realistic appraisal of his son's 'nature' – but not of its causes. This should not surprise us: even today, the prince's medical condition remains an enigma. Don Carlos was born after a difficult labour that lasted three days, which may have deprived him of oxygen at times and caused right-side hemiparesis, resulting in speech and balance difficulties which persisted throughout his life. He also experienced what would be called today an emotionally deprived childhood. He was an only child, his mother surviving his birth by a mere four days, in 1545; his father was abroad from 1548 to 1551. Furthermore, at eleven months he also lost his wet-nurse, which provoked 'an intense, continuous and inconsolable wailing, anger, and refusal to eat'; and at age seven he was abruptly separated from both his aunt Juana and his governess, who had taken care of him and for whom he felt affection. When his father left Spain again in 1554, Don Carlos in effect became an orphan. As psychiatrist Prudencio Rodríguez Ramos has written, 'Don Carlos experienced an emotionally and physically complicated childhood', which can produce 'a complex and narcissistic personality'. Dr Rodríguez Ramos continued,

> Children with similar affective losses tend to seek affection in assertive and indiscriminate ways, and display their emotions without restraint. That description fits the infancy and adolescence of Don Carlos: anxious for affection and loyalty from anyone, extreme in his likes and dislikes, and explosive in his reaction to the slightest frustration.[12]

The prince suffered from one more problem, thanks to the consanguinity favoured by the Habsburg dynasty: his deficient gene pool. Instead of eight great-grandparents, Don Carlos had only four, and instead of sixteen great-great-grandparents he had only six. Even this under-represents the endogamy. Many of Don Carlos's Burgundian and Trastámaran ancestors also had intermarried: thus Mary of Burgundy had just six great-grandparents instead of eight, while her son Philip I married his third cousin Juana, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, themselves the product of numerous intermarriages among the various branches of the House of Trastámara. Repeated intermarriages created an 'inbreeding coefficient' for Charles V of 0.037, but the marriage of both Charles and Philip to their double-cousins dramatically increased Don Carlos's 'inbreeding coefficient' to 0.211 – almost as high as the children of brother and sister, or parent and child (0.25).

Although these incestuous unions created a vast empire, just as they were meant to do, they also produced heirs with serious defects: not just poor health, physical deformities and general weakness, but also reduced fertility. Inbreeding may explain why only four of the fifteen children sired by Philip survived into



11. Don Carlos and his absentee ancestors. Don Carlos was the great-grandson of Juana 'the Mad' through both his father and his mother – thus giving him a double-dose of the mental instability in her line. Moreover, instead of eight great-grandparents, he had only four. A marriage to his cousin Anne, ardently desired by both him and Anne's parents, would have reduced the gene pool even further.

Wife	Pregnancies	Miscarriages	Died Aged 0–2	Died Aged 3–10	Survived Childhood	Survived Philip
Mary Manuela	1	0	0	0	1	0
Mary Tudor	2?	2?	0	0	0	0
Isabel of France	5	2	1	0	2	1
Anne of Austria	7	1	2	2	1	1
Total	**15**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**2**

12. The limited fertility of Philip II. Both the Portuguese and the Spanish royal families sought to unite the entire Iberian peninsula under one sceptre; and to that end, generation after generation intermarried. Although incest eventually produced the desired effect – in 1580 Philip of Spain succeeded to the Portuguese throne – it drastically reduced the gene pool of the dynasty and may also have reduced its fertility. Only four of the fifteen children sired by Philip survived to become adults, and only two became parents.

adulthood. Endogamy had already caused serious problems for the royal family. Queen Juana, grandmother of both Philip II and María Manuela, lived in confinement at Tordesillas until her death in 1555, her behaviour so idiosyncratic that towards the end even her own progeny feared she might be either a witch or a heretic. Juana's grandmother Isabella of Portugal had also been locked up, ending her days a demented prisoner in Arévalo castle. Don Carlos thus not only possessed a remarkably small gene pool but one that contained at least two cases of serious mental instability.

Initially, Philip entertained no doubts about Don Carlos's ability to succeed him. His testament of 1557 named his son as his 'universal heir' and decreed that he should govern the Netherlands as well as Spain and its overseas territories after his death, albeit subject to a council of regency until he reached the age of 20. Two years later, perhaps recalling the humiliating regime imposed on him by his own father after he married (chapter 1), Philip signed a codicil that loosened this restriction: the regency would end and Don Carlos would rule as well as reign as soon as he 'is married, even if he has not reached the said age [of 20]'.[13] But long before then, Don Carlos displayed some worrying physical

problems. His shoulders were uneven, his left leg was shorter than his right, and his muscles were weak; he also suffered from 'quartan fever' (probably malaria) that periodically left him incapacitated. In 1561, after a particularly severe bout of fever 'left him so weak and exhausted that his doctors believe he needs a change of air', Philip decided to send his son to Alcalá de Henares, where he could enjoy a salubrious climate and acquire the university education that the king himself lacked.[14]

At first all went well, and the prince took his studies seriously. Then in April 1562, perhaps because of his physical asymmetry, Don Carlos missed his footing when descending a flight of stairs and fell heavily against a door, suffering a serious head injury. Initially he seemed only dazed, and he talked with his doctors as they dressed his wound and bled him; but after ten days, perhaps because the dressing was not sterile, the wound festered and Don Carlos developed a fever. The infection (termed 'erysipelas' by his doctors) spread through the prince's lymphatic system from his head (abscesses forced his eyes shut) to his neck and chest. He soon became delirious.

Philip had visited soon after the accident but returned to Madrid once his son's recovery seemed assured: now he hastened back to Alcalá, and in the palace of the archbishop of Toledo (the unfortunate Carranza) he attended fourteen lengthy consultations among the doctors treating his son. He also ordered prayers and processions throughout the kingdom for the health of Don Carlos, and he himself prayed by his bedside – but apparently to no avail: on 9 May the doctors predicted that the prince would die within a few hours. The king's confessor, Fray Bernardo de Fresneda, a Franciscan, now suggested an alternative course of action. 'Since His Highness was so ill, there was no longer any hope for an earthly remedy, and they must look instead for a cure from heaven.' Specifically, Fresneda proposed bringing to the prince's bedside the earthly remains of Fray Diego de Alcalá, a local Franciscan, which had acquired a local reputation for performing miracles. Despite misgivings, the king issued the necessary orders for the friar's sarcophagus to be broken open and for his remains to be placed beside the prince, who touched them just before he lost consciousness.[15]

Unwilling to watch his son and heir die, Philip now rode back to Madrid where he prayed as he waited for the apparently inevitable news – but that same night the prince began to recover. A week later the doctors were able to drain the abscesses that had closed his eyes and removed a sequestrum of bone from the site of his head injury. His fever abated. Philip, overjoyed, celebrated this deliverance by distributing alms, pardoning those in prison for debt and walking in a special procession before hearing a sermon that called for the canonization of Diego de Alcalá in view of this evident miracle. On 16 June, almost two months after his fall, Don Carlos managed to stand and embrace his father and the following day he gave an audience to a group of ambassadors who came to offer

their congratulations on his recovery. He remained seated, wearing his hat to cover the wound and, although he was gracious, the Venetian ambassador found Don Carlos 'very pale and weak. He is of very small stature, far shorter than one would expect for his seventeen years.' When his doctors weighed him three weeks later, they found that the prince 'weighed in jacket and hose, with damask underwear, three arrobas and one pound' – that is, just 76 pounds.[16]

Philip now resumed his efforts to pave the way for his son's smooth succession. In 1563 he went to Aragon and tried to persuade the Cortes to take an oath of allegiance to Don Carlos even though, 'because of his illness and weakness, I decided not to bring him with me on this occasion'. At one point Philip claimed that if only the Cortes would break with precedent and swear obedience to an absentee prince 'I would consider it a good bargain to promise not to increase taxes again in my lifetime' – an extraordinary offer (and a foolish one, given that he lived for thirty-five more years, whereas Don Carlos died within five years), but one that fully revealed the king's continued confidence in his son.[17]

The prince seemed to have two personalities – or as his father later expressed it, he 'has phases, so that at some times there is more serenity than at others'. In 1564 Baron Adam von Dietrichstein arrived in Spain as the new Imperial ambassador and his first assignment was to finalize the marriage of Don Carlos with María and Maximilian's daughter Anne (who would later marry Philip himself). When he found the king evasive on the matter, Dietrichstein started asking his Spanish contacts about the prince. The information he acquired was 'pretty bad [*schlecht genueg*]': apart from his physical deformities and poor health, the prince displayed disturbing mood swings. Although 'in many matters the prince shows good understanding', Dietrichstein reported, 'by contrast in others he is still like a child of seven years. He wants to know everything and asks about everything, but with no sense of proportion and to no purpose.' Furthermore 'his sense of judgement does not seem sufficiently developed to allow him to distinguish the good from the bad, the worthless from the valuable, or the possible from the impossible'. Dietrichstein modified his views somewhat after he met the prince. Although he found that Don Carlos's body was indeed deformed, and that he spoke with some difficulty (in particular mixing up his 'r' and 'l' sounds), the ambassador noted that he could always make himself understood. Dietrichstein also found that the prince 'has a quick and violent temper, and he often loses it; he says whatever is on his mind freely and without restraint, and without stopping to think whom he might offend'; but he considered some of the other negative opinions he had heard to be exaggerated.

> He has already spoken to me several times and, according to his habit, asked me many questions; but far from finding them irrelevant, as I have been told

> is often the case, they all seemed very sensible to me. He has an excellent memory, and means well, so that it seems his hostile behaviour, which can be extreme, is not malicious . . . He is strongly religious, very fond of justice and truth; he hates lies and forgives no one who has ever told a lie.[18]

Father against son

Philip, like many other parents of unstable children, seems to have felt a combination of guilt and denial, of inadequacy and anger, when faced with his son's unpredictable mood swings. Not long after his trip to Aragon, he lamented to the duke of Alba the lack of moral and physical strength in his son, 'not only in his judgement and lifestyle but also in his understanding, which lags far behind what one would expect at his age'; and, in response to Dietrichstein's nagging about finalizing wedding arrangements with Anne, the king reminded Maximilian that 'although my son is already nineteen years old, and although other children develop late, God wishes that mine lags far behind all others'.[19]

At what point did Philip decide that Don Carlos must not be allowed to succeed him on the throne? Ten days after the prince's arrest and imprisonment, Ruy Gómez told the French ambassador that 'it is more than three years since the king fully realized that the prince's brain was even more deformed than his body' – a cruel and unworthy jibe – 'and that he would never have the necessary judgement' to govern; adding that 'His Majesty has long dissimulated this realization, hoping that age would bring wisdom and discretion; but exactly the opposite happened, for every day he became worse'.[20] This statement dates the king's change of heart to 1565, and indeed from that point onwards criticisms of the prince's conduct multiplied. In his Final Relation that year, Ambassador Giovanni Soranzo informed the Venetian Senate that 'the prince neither hears nor heeds anyone' and 'is by nature very cruel'. He 'has extraordinary habits' and 'is nice to nobody. In everything he does he shows pride and arrogance.' The following year a courtier who saw a lot of Don Carlos informed a confidant that 'the prince is getting worse every day – not in health, but in an ailment that is harder to cure'. In April 1567 Ambassador Fourquevaux noted that Don Carlos was 'somewhat disobedient to his father', while the king, for his part, had 'little confidence in the capacity and adequacy of the said prince his son to leave him as ruler and heir to so many states'.[21]

Later in 1567, however, the same Fourquevaux reported that 'at present the prince is a good son, so that he is getting from his father all he wants. Moreover the councils of State and War meet in his room and he commands absolutely in many matters of state and wants to be obeyed without question.' Government documents partially support these claims. Thus in April, when letters arrived warning that the Dutch rebels might recruit German troops, Philip endorsed

the package. 'Tell Ruy Gómez to inform the prince that he should summon the council of State to meet immediately in his presence, where they should consider these letters and discuss how to respond to them – and especially concerning this point.' Six months later, when another package arrived from Germany, Philip instructed his secretary: 'This should be seen by the council, with the prince present.'[22] The king did the same with dispatches from the Netherlands. In spring 1567 Secretary of State Antonio Pérez reported 'it seems the council will meet this afternoon, with the prince'. Don Carlos was well prepared for such discussions because Margaret of Parma wrote letters directly to him from Brussels and he was also in touch with the Netherlands ministers who resided at the king's court.[23]

Fray Bernardo de Fresneda, the royal confessor who had advocated using the bones of Fray Diego de Alcalá when the prince seemed close to death, provided an interesting explanation for his involvement in affairs of state. Shortly after the prince's arrest he told an ambassador:

> We put up with his excesses to see whether they might diminish over time; and we created various tests to see whether the extravagant things he did proceeded from youthful anger, or a desire to dominate, or lack of wisdom. That's why the king allowed him to preside over the council, granted him executive power in many matters, and ordered that he be allowed to receive large sums of money.

Fresneda concluded that this had proved a dangerous strategy, because 'we found that when the prince entered the council, he created confusion everywhere and held up the transaction of business'. Moreover Don Carlos 'used the authority granted by the king to further his own wickedness'.[24]

This 'wickedness' took several forms. Thus in December 1566, when Philip presided over the opening of the Cortes of Castile in the Madrid Alcázar, he brought along the prince, who sat beside his father as a royal secretary read the royal charge to the assembly, asking for funds to pay (among other things) for his return to the Netherlands. After the royal party withdrew, the Cortes began to discuss not only how to finance the king's voyage but also the regency arrangements during his absence, with many deputies calling for Don Carlos to remain behind, just as Philip had done during the absences of his father. This was not at all what the prince wanted, and so he returned to the room where the Cortes met and threatened that 'anyone who recommended that he remain in Spain would become, along with the city he represented, his capital enemy'. He also announced that 'he was determined to go wherever His Majesty went, and that the whole world could not stop him', and then stormed out of the assembly.[25] Why?

Don Carlos knew that Maximilian and María planned to meet Philip in Brussels, bringing with them their daughter Anne, whom the prince was to marry – and he showed considerable enthusiasm about marrying her. Don Carlos 'very much liked' her portrait, which he put 'in a round ebony box, with silver mouldings'. He also showed considerable enthusiasm about the Empire. In July 1566 the prince started to pay a salary to 'Luis de Morisote who taught him the German language', and he purchased German artefacts and several German books, including 'a book about the knight Theuerdank' in German.[26] Anne was fluent in Spanish, so Don Carlos did not need to learn German for her sake; but perhaps the purchase of *Theuerdank* reveals his intentions, because the epic poem narrated the odyssey of Emperor Maximilian I to marry Mary of Burgundy – an encouraging example for his great-grandson.

Acts of 'wickedness' steadily multiplied. On one occasion Don Carlos defenestrated a page who annoyed him; on another 'His Highness became very angry and annoyed' with Juan Estébez de Lobón, the keeper of his wardrobe,

> because he could not find a receipt, so much so that he wanted to throw him out of a window, but some gentlemen of his bedchamber saw this and prevented him. And so His Highness ordered the said Lobón to be dismissed and sent back to his home, calling him a villain and a thief, and saying that he had committed treason.[27]

Yet more 'wickedness' came to light on the night of the arrest. The king discovered over 30,000 escudos in the prince's apartment, and debts of over 200,000 ducats to various bankers; while letters dated 1 December 1567, signed 'Yo el príncipe', ordered his chamberlain to raise 600,000 ducats in Seville and to do so 'with all the secrecy and propriety possible' in connection with 'an unavoidable and most urgent necessity'.[28]

Treason and plot?

Even the officials of the royal treasury could not identify this costly 'necessity' when in 1572 they audited the prince's accounts. He had left some items deliberately vague – such as two payments of over 1,000 ducats 'which His Highness authorized on the last day of April 1567 to be given to a certain person in secret' – while others could no longer be explained: an official wrote despairingly beside the twenty-nine loans to the prince by Anton Fugger and his nephews: 'we do not know why this was done.'[29] Ambassador Emilio Roberti of Mantua was apparently the only contemporary who divined the real reason for the prince's 'necessity': 'His Highness wrote to the grandees [of Spain] inviting them to accompany him on a journey, which we now know was to travel on the

royal galleys to Italy, and present himself to the emperor ready to marry' his daughter. [30] That is, knowing that the emperor still wanted him to marry Anne, Don Carlos had concluded that his only chance to circumvent Philip's opposition was to imitate his great-grandfather Maximilian in *Theuerdank* and claim his betrothed in person. Unfortunately for him, the success of his plan depended on the willing participation of his uncle Don John of Austria, named captain-general of the royal fleet on 15 January 1568, who now commanded the galleys necessary for the prince to reach Italy.

At a meeting with his uncle on 16 January Don Carlos apparently revealed his plan, indicating that he would be ready to leave court 'the next night' and begging for assistance. Don John asked for time to think about this and immediately informed the king. According to several observers, the prince soon realized that he had been betrayed and, having loaded and cocked an arquebus, invited Don John to return to his apartment, intending to kill him. A suspicious gentleman of the prince's bedchamber uncocked the weapon so Don Carlos could not use it when his uncle arrived. Instead he drew his dagger. Don John, who was much stronger, pushed him away and shouted very loudly 'Don't come one step closer, Your Highness!' which brought several attendants running. Don John seized the prince's dagger and took it to the king as evidence. News of the plan, and of the attempted assassination, finally compelled Philip to act. As Ambassador Roberti wrote: 'The king, who was already giving serious thought to what the prince was planning, decided that he could not continue to dissimulate.' The arrest took place that night.[31]

One might have expected that the papers seized by Philip in the prince's apartment would clarify everything because, as Fourquevaux observed, 'the prince wrote down in his own hand everything he thought, and in this way himself revealed the ten thousand or so foolish and strange dreams in his head'. Certainly the king lost no time in perusing his son's archive: according to Pereira, Philip was 'reading though the prince's papers' the next day 'from lunchtime until well into the night'.[32] Although no document written by Don Carlos describing his plans has survived, the archive of Simancas contains a large bundle of letters received by the prince during his last year of liberty from a surprisingly large number of people around the Monarchy. All of them displayed great anxiety to please. From Milan, a treasury official informed Don Carlos of 'what was happening for the service of His Majesty'; from Genoa, the Spanish ambassador relayed news about the Ottoman fleet; and from New Spain, the viceroy reported that 'this land is, thanks be to God, tranquil and at peace' and sent the prince 'three tigers' as a present. Although these letters seemed innocuous, others did not. From Laredo, in northern Spain, a merchant shared his personal grievances with the prince because the king 'will not listen to my pleas for justice'; while from Granada, the president of the Chancery

announced that he had intervened to ensure the speedy trial of someone the prince favoured. Even if Philip could overlook these indiscretions, he could hardly miss the extravagant language used by all the prince's correspondents, whatever the contents of their letters: 'May Our Lord watch over the most high and most mighty person of Your Highness, increasing your kingdoms and dominions as I, your most insignificant vassal, desire' and signing off 'the most faithful vassal of Your Highness, whose royal hands I kiss'. These unctuous formulas, unparalleled in the records of the Habsburg Monarchy, appear in letters from so many different correspondents that they could only stem from a directive from either the prince or a member of his entourage.[33]

That entourage contained many talented young men who would later rise to prominence: don Cristóbal de Moura and don Juan de Idiáquez, who would become Philip II's most trusted advisers in the last fifteen years of his reign; don Juan de Silva and don Juan de Borja, who would both (like Moura) play a crucial role in the union of Portugal and Castile. All four formed part of a group of courtiers known as 'the Academy' which gathered around the duke of Alba. Initially, the group met in Alba's apartment but after he left for the Netherlands they gathered with increasing frequency in the prince's apartments in the Madrid Alcázar. There they discussed not only women, poetry, war and chivalry, but also 'how to become a royal Favourite' and 'how to transact business at court'. Many members held an office in the prince's household, and Don Carlos himself may have attended some discussions.[34]

Although no evidence exists that any of these men showed disloyalty to Philip, the prince and his household certainly represented the 'reversionary interest' in the Monarchy: if the king had died at any point before midnight on 18 January 1568 the members of Alba's Academy would immediately have gained control of the central government. Conversely, if Philip had predeceased his son, everyone involved in the arrest would face disgrace if not death. As the papal nuncio put it, just two weeks after the arrest: 'The prince has a mortal hatred of the ministers most esteemed by the king, and if he should ever gain the throne, they and their progeny will be ruined.' The nuncio therefore predicted that Ruy Gómez, Feria, Espinosa and the others 'would take legal proceedings' to ensure that the prince 'should never gain the throne'. Ambassador Fourquevaux agreed, predicting that 'there will be a formal trial of the prince of Spain to declare him incapable of succeeding'.[35]

Although no reliable evidence suggests that Don Carlos was ever put on trial, the royal historian Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas later affirmed that the option received serious discussion: 'It was said in the court that the king wanted to start a trial, and to have the council declare the prince incompetent to succeed to the crown', but abandoned the idea 'since no evidence emerged that the prince had undertaken anything against his father, nor held any opinions

or thoughts against the faith, but rather showed signs of being a most Catholic prince and a true son of the Church.'[36] The king therefore decided to keep his son locked up until he died – just like his grandmother Juana (to whom the Cortes of Castile had sworn allegiance as queen). Perhaps Philip reasoned that if Charles V could keep his mother locked up for half a century, he could do the same with his son.

The prisoner

Certainly, permanent incarceration seems to have been Philip's intention from the outset. Two days after the arrest, he had informed Catherine of Portugal that his son would never leave prison (page 178 above) and, after a while, he revealed his resolution to others. Thus in April he reminded the duke of Alba, who had asked for more guidance on the subject, that

> I did not imprison [the prince] either to put an end to his behaviour or to reform his character, because this technique of improvement would fail like all the earlier ones . . . My aim was to find a permanent remedy to the problems that could arise during the rest of my life, and above all after my death. And so, since Time is unlikely to bring a cure, the decision I have taken is permanent.[37]

Philip had depersonalized his son, turning him into a purely administrative problem: all he needed to do now was ensure that Don Carlos, like Queen Juana before him, remained under secure guard and received enough to eat and drink. The latter proved the greater problem. Francisco Pereira reported late in February that the prince had eaten little during the previous week and nothing at all for four days, and that when his confessor failed to persuade him to eat, his guardians 'entered his room with an iron tool in their hand and a machine to make him open his mouth, and in this way forced him to eat a little soup and meat'.[38] On one occasion the prince consumed a diamond, hoping it would poison him; but his doctors administered purges until it emerged again. In the end, according to the count of Lerma, his jailer, the prince 'had not eaten for fifteen days in order to kill himself'. But then,

> persuaded by his confessor and his doctor, he wanted to eat and to live; but neither was possible by then, because the passages that convey our food had closed up, so that he could scarcely take even a little broth . . . but every day he drank a gallon or more of iced water, which would have sufficed to kill a thousand men made of iron [almost certainly a symptom of malaria]. In the end, they told him that he could not survive, and when he heard this he confessed

> and received all the sacraments, including extreme unction, with great sorrow and regret for his sins. He lived for three more days like this, showing every sign of being a good Christian, and calling out to God for mercy and to his father for forgiveness and his blessing.[39]

He failed to obtain the latter. Instead of visiting his son, the king moved to the Escorial and made a trip to El Bosque de Segovia before returning to the capital when news arrived that his son was dead. Philip now secluded himself in a monastery and ordered his subjects 'to wear mourning and take the other accustomed actions' in memory of the 'most serene prince Don Carlos, my dear and beloved son'.[40] When Philip began to re-inter the corpses of his family at the Escorial, his dead son arrived first (together with the body of Queen Isabel, his third wife) and he allowed Pompeo Leone to use a striking 1567 portrait of the prince in armour as his model for the vast statue in the cenotaph beside the high altar in the basilica of the Escorial where, alone among the king's offspring, he stands beside his father (see plate 22). The decision to include Don Carlos, and thus perpetuate the memory of the heir who had so disappointed him, cost Philip II around 13,000 ducats – no mean investment.

As Fourquevaux slyly noted, the prince's 'death has solved a number of problems that faced the Catholic King' – and those close to the king and his son knew it. The count of Lerma breathed an audible sigh of relief when he reported his prisoner's passing:

> God had done the greatest favour imaginable in granting the prince a good death, since he so little deserved it, and a great favour to all Christendom by taking him to heaven, because if he had lived he would assuredly have destroyed everything, since his nature and habits were so disordered. The prince is just fine where he is, and all of us who knew him give thanks to God for it.

The duke of Alba's agent at court likewise rejoiced 'because, given his habits', had the prince lived 'he could have put at risk the peace of these kingdoms, especially had he managed to escape from his confinement'. Don Juan de Zúñiga, who had seen the prince on a regular basis right up to his arrest, entirely agreed. 'What we all know about the personality of the prince', he wrote to a colleague, had made me 'afraid of him, so that I went against the advice of all my friends and refused to serve him'; but 'when I saw that you had done the same' – that is, declined to serve Don Carlos – 'it convinced me that I was right'.[41] Even Queen Isabel hinted at insanity in a tearful letter to Fourquevaux written the morning after the prince's arrest – 'God has wished to make public his true nature' – and the ambassador himself expressed disbelief at Maximilian's

insistence on pressing on with the plan to marry Anne: 'The emperor claims that he does not know – or does not want to know – the real cause of the prince's imprisonment, namely the striking incapacity and lack of common sense in the poor young man.'[42]

Four and a half centuries later it is hard to resolve the enigma of Don Carlos. A few surviving letters, written when he was 22, display an epistolary style more appropriate to a child half his age (see plate 35). It is hard to imagine someone who wrote with such difficulty ruling an empire on which the sun never set – and that was his destiny, because although his father would experience opposition in enforcing his claim to the Portuguese throne in 1580, no one disputed that Don Carlos was heir presumptive to his cousin Sebastian. But therein lay the central problem: the endogamy that made the prince next in line to his cousin also accentuated his physical and mental weakness.

Philip's explanation for his drastic measures on 18 January 1568 – that he had not acted 'for some offence or wrong he had done to our person, nor anything like it' – was thus not entirely true: the prince's plan to flee to Germany, and perhaps even more his attempt to assassinate Don John, apparently served as the trigger. Nevertheless the underlying cause lay in the prince's 'natural and unique temperament'. As most courtiers and diplomats recognized, this left Philip with no alternative than to place his son under permanent restraint, just as Charles V had done with his own mother. Philip's misfortune lay in the fact that his contemporaries were no better equipped to understand genetic defects and traumatic head injuries than he was, so that many of them accepted the baseless assertions of John Man, William of Orange and the anonymous author of *Diogenes*, that his father had murdered him.

PART IV

THE KING VICTORIOUS

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Years of crusade, 1568–1572

The year 1568 was an *annus horribilis* for Philip II. Apart from the tragedy of Don Carlos and the death of his wife Isabel, his disaffected Dutch subjects secured foreign support for an invasion of the Netherlands that cost a fortune to defeat. Worst of all, at the end of the year, the Moriscos of Granada rebelled. Even in Madrid, criticism of the king and his policies mounted. 'It makes me sad and depressed to see Your Majesty angry and frustrated at what people are saying,' Philip's chief adviser, Cardinal Diego de Espinosa, wrote soothingly, adding 'I therefore beg Your Majesty not to exhaust yourself.' In a remarkably frank rescript, Philip revealed how demoralized he felt:

> These things cannot fail to cause pain and exhaustion, and, believe me, I am so exhausted and pained by them, and by what happens in this world, that if it was not for the business of Granada and other things which cannot be abandoned, I do not know what I would do . . . Certainly I am no good for the world of today. I know very well that I should be in some other station in life, one less exalted than the one God has given me, which for me alone is terrible. And many people criticize me for this. May God grant that in heaven we will be treated better.[1]

Over the next two years, Philip's situation improved dramatically. His troops pacified both the Netherlands and Granada; his fourth wife, Anne, bore the longed-for heir; and his brother won a spectacular victory over the Ottoman navy at Lepanto. Espinosa now felt jubilant. Spain had a prince, he boasted to the duke of Alba at the end of 1571, 'and His Majesty is healthy. With this and with the great victory at sea (the greatest since Moses parted the Red Sea), it seems that we lack little.' Nevertheless, some continued to criticize the king's reliance on Espinosa. That same day, the duke of Alba's agent in Madrid reported:

> The world here continues as usual – I mean the government, because the man in red [*el rojo*: Espinosa] still carries everything on his shoulders, although there is no shortage of people who would like to relieve him of his burden, at least in part. Indeed the matter has now reached such a state that preachers use their pulpits to tell His Majesty openly of the evils of entrusting so much to one person.

The events of 1572 would show the folly both of the crusading policies that 'the man in red' had pressed upon the king and of 'entrusting so much to one person'.[2]

'Creating a New World': the duke of Alba and the Netherlands

The duke of Alba brought with him to Brussels in 1567 an extensive agenda, elaborated in his meetings with Philip at Aranjuez: 'If Your Majesty looks closely at what is to be done,' the duke observed, 'you will see that it amounts to creating a New World.' The king committed part of his agenda to paper in formal Instructions, but much remained secret and in June 1568 Alba provided a detailed account of how he had implemented 'the orders I committed to memory'.[3] The first and most important of these was 'to arrest the most prominent suspects and offenders, in order to give them an exemplary punishment, and also some of the guilty lesser offenders'. Accordingly, two weeks after he arrived in Brussels, Alba created a special court, the 'council of Troubles', to try all those suspected of rebellion or heresy. He then arrested and imprisoned Egmont and Hornes, their secretaries and some other political leaders, charging all of them with treason; and in March 1568, his agents coordinated the simultaneous arrest throughout the Netherlands of over 500 suspects, including all available signatories of the Compromise. Over the next five years the council of Troubles tried over 12,000 persons for treason and condemned almost 9,000 of them to lose some or all of their goods. It executed over 1,000 of them, including Egmont and Hornes.

Alba had less success to report in fiscal matters. Philip had instructed him to ensure that the Netherlands henceforth fund their own administration and defence by imposing a sales tax (similar to the *alcabala* in Spain). The duke boasted that the Netherlands would soon provide '300,000 ducats a year which Your Majesty can put in your treasury' to form a strategic reserve 'to meet the emergencies that may arise', but the invasion of the Netherlands by troops commanded by William of Orange forced him to postpone this initiative. It took Alba almost six months to destroy most of his adversaries. Few escaped (although Orange was one of them) and the duke regarded his success as proof of divine favour for Philip's cause ('God be praised for showing such clear and evident favour to Your Majesty's affairs'). The king, by contrast, showed more interest in raising taxes.[4] Defeating Orange had required the dispatch of a

further two million ducats from Spain, and a month later the Moriscos of Granada rebelled, leading Philip to warn his lieutenant in Brussels: 'I am very much afraid that sending so much money from here to help you over there will one day cause us problems, without sufficient resources at a time when we may most need them.'[5] In April 1569 Alba dutifully convened the States of the various Netherlands provinces and demanded that they approve three new taxes. They agreed to the Hundredth Penny (a tax of 1 per cent on capital assets), mainly because it would be a one-time levy, which eventually produced almost two million ducats; but they rejected both the Twentieth Penny (a 5 per cent levy on all sales of land), and the Tenth Penny or *alcabala* (a 10 per cent tax on all other sales). The duke used his Spanish troops to induce the States to offer another one-time levy of two million ducats and, given the critical situation of the Monarchy, the king authorized Alba to accept this offer.

Having accomplished so much, in 1570 Alba asked the king for permission to return to Spain. Philip's long response showed a remarkable understanding of his prickly and proud subordinate.

> You have achieved so much there in God's service and mine that I am well aware that it has been the salvation and preservation of those provinces, and at present you may feel that you have accomplished everything necessary to put religion, justice, obedience, treasury, defence and the other things on a sound footing . . . Nevertheless, if you do not stay on for a while to finish the task entirely, it could easily revert to its former state.

Philip continued slyly: 'Taking these final steps directly affects you, because if something should undermine your achievement, or if some unfortunate event should occur because it remained incomplete, it could not fail to cause you much grief and regret.' Therefore, although 'I understand your good reasons to want some leave and rest, after such a long absence and after all the spiritual and physical exertions required of you since you left Spain', Philip turned the question back to the questioner. 'I urge you to weigh these two considerations most carefully with the Christian prudence that God has given you, keeping in mind the primacy you have always given to His service and mine.' If, after mature reflection, the duke decided that he could safely leave without 'the dangers that I foresee', he must tell the king 'at once, using an express messenger, and I will then name and send a successor so that he can be there a few days before your own departure'.[6]

Philip's letter was a masterpiece. He appeared to leave Alba free to choose, but by asking how the duke would feel 'if some unfortunate event should occur because [your work] remained incomplete' he made virtually sure that he would stay at his post. Alba would bitterly regret his decision not to return to

Spain while his reputation remained more or less intact, but that lay in the future. For the moment, both he and the king focused their attention on the journey of Anne of Austria through the Netherlands.

The lonesome death of Baron Montigny

In 1566 Margaret of Parma had sent a prominent Netherlands nobleman, Floris de Montmorency, Baron Montigny and brother of the count of Hornes, as her special envoy to Spain (chapter 8). As soon as news arrived in Madrid that Alba had arrested Egmont and Hornes, Montigny was seized and imprisoned in Segovia castle. Although the baron denied any wrongdoing, the testimony and confiscated papers of his colleagues incriminated him. In addition, the baron had publicly rebuked the king over his refusal to go to the Netherlands, 'bringing colour to His Majesty's cheeks'; moreover, nine months after his arrest he was captured while trying to escape. The council of Troubles reviewed the case against him *in absentia*, found him guilty of treason and decreed that 'his head be cut off and displayed on a pike'. Alba referred the dossier to Philip and kept this verdict secret until he received a response.[7] Shortly afterwards, Anne of Austria arrived in Brussels, and Alba reported that Montigny's relatives and friends reminded her of the baron's long career of service to the dynasty. Anne graciously agreed to champion his cause. The duke pointed out to Philip that it would be difficult 'to cut off his head' and 'display it on a pike' after Anne had begged her new husband to show clemency; he therefore suggested that it would be simpler to kill Montigny before the queen arrived and pretend he had died of natural causes.[8]

Philip accepted this advice. Some of his advisers in Madrid suggested 'putting some sort of poison in Montigny's food or drink' but 'it seemed to His Majesty that this would not be an act of justice, and that it would be better to garrotte him in his cell with such secrecy that no one would ever know that he had not died of natural causes'. Philip ruled out killing the baron in Segovia castle, where he still languished in prison, because that was where the marriage to Anne would take place; so in August 1570, just as his bride prepared to leave the Netherlands, Philip ordered Don Eugenio de Peralta, castellan of Simancas, to go to Segovia and take Montigny under guard to the archive fortress.[9]

Philip now orchestrated the most elaborate and remarkable act of dissimulation of his entire reign. Peralta allowed his prisoner unusual freedom within the walls of Simancas, even allowing him 'to sunbathe in a patio', but the day before Anne landed at Santander, Peralta left a forged 'paper, written in Latin, near Montigny's apartment' that apparently revealed new escape plans. This justified placing the baron in close confinement again, and Peralta now composed a letter full of falsehoods specifically (Philip later explained to Alba)

'so they could later be made public both here and there [in Flanders]'. According to Peralta's letter, the baron had contracted 'a fever which (according to the doctors) is extremely serious' and the castellan sent for a compliant doctor, who 'entered and left the fortress as if he were treating Montigny, bringing with him medicines', and also a confessor.[10]

The next stage of the deception now unfolded. A royal judge, together with a notary and an executioner, came secretly to Simancas and notified Montigny that he had been sentenced to death. Philip had given permission for the baron 'to confess and receive the sacraments, if it seemed appropriate, and to turn back to God and repent'; and once he had recovered his composure, Montigny confessed, took communion and drew up a statement of his innocence. He expressed his appreciation for 'the king's clemency and goodness' for deciding 'that he should be executed in private and not in public' (the fate of his brother, Hornes), but he 'continued to protest his innocence'. 'Once he finished speaking', the last act of Philip's dissimulation took place.

> The executioner did his job, garrotting him, and immediately the royal judge, the notary and the executioner left . . . so that no one knew they had been in Simancas; and the said notary and executioner were placed under sentence of death if they ever revealed it. After this, [Peralta] dressed Montigny in a Franciscan habit, to conceal the fact that he had been garrotted, announced his death, and started to plan his burial.

By the time Anne reached Valladolid, only seven miles from Simancas, Montigny was dead and buried. Philip gloated to Alba that the deception had 'succeeded so well that up to now everyone believes he died of his illness', and no doubt he spent his wedding night in Segovia castle with a clear conscience: the pleas of his new wife for clemency had come just too late.[11]

Another 'New World'

Philip's fiscal pressure on the Netherlands formed part of a remarkable Imperial strategy that sought to mobilize the resources of all his dominions. In 1568 the king tasked Espinosa with creating a large committee, soon known as the Junta Magna, to overhaul the entire colonial administration. From the outset, the ministers followed the admirable precept 'that the general principles in all these matters are the ones that can be dealt with and settled here: we must refer specific and detailed matters to those who will put them into practice' (a distinction that Philip himself might have embraced with profit).[12]

The junta began with religious matters because in the words of Fray Bernardo de Fresneda, the royal confessor, 'promulgating the Sacred Scriptures

forms the basis for the just claim of His Majesty and his predecessors to rule and be sovereigns over those dominions'. It recommended the introduction of provincial councils, episcopal visitations and new dioceses (each with a seminary) as enjoined by the council of Trent; and to fund these ecclesiastical innovations it proposed a more equitable division of tithes so that local churches and convents received more support. The junta also called for the establishment of tribunals of the Inquisition in Mexico and Lima both to persecute heresy and to 'silence the differences of opinion that have developed among the preachers and confessors in those provinces concerning the jurisdiction and moral justification for what we acquired and now hold' – in other words, no cleric could henceforth call the legality of Spanish rule into question.[13] Next came the economic foundations of the colonies. To ameliorate the lot of indigenous subjects, the junta proposed reforms to the landholding system; to stimulate production, it devised new regulations for mining, commerce and manufacture; and to augment the crown's revenues, it advocated a combination of tribute levied on communities (rather than on individuals) and a sales tax.

After three months of intense but focused discussion, the junta presented its comprehensive recommendations to the king. Don Francisco de Toledo, named as viceroy of Peru, who had participated in the debates, made an additional request: so that he should be both 'feared and loved' he sought permission to use both 'the sword of punishment' and 'the gratification of rewards'. Philip agreed, and even allowed Toledo and his colleague Don Martín Enriquez, named viceroy of New Spain, to spend money without his express warrant whenever they engaged in 'pacification' and 'in time of war and rebellion'.[14] Thanks to this flexibility, Enriquez waged a 'war of blood and fire' against the Chichimecas to stabilize the northern frontier of New Spain; while Toledo subjugated the last Inca survivors in Peru and sent vital reinforcements to the settlers of Chile in their struggle against the Araucanians. These initiatives cemented Madrid's control over the American continent from the Rio Grande in northern Mexico to the Bio Bio in Chile, while the religious, political, economic and military initiatives proposed by the Junta Magna and endorsed by the king ensured that America would remain Spanish until the nineteenth century and Catholic to this day. It forms Philip's greatest achievement and his most lasting legacy.

Rebellion in Spain: the Morisco Revolt

The Junta Magna was one of two bodies, both chaired by Espinosa, tasked by Philip with promoting uniformity among his subjects. The other, created in 1566, debated what to do about the 400,000 Moriscos of Spain, an ethnic minority equivalent to about 6 per cent of the total population – but not evenly spread across the country: almost half of all Moriscos lived in the kingdoms of Aragon

and Valencia, where they made up between one-fifth and one-third of the population, while most of the rest populated the kingdom of Granada, comprising over half of the total inhabitants. Some mountainous regions, like the Alpujarras south and east of Granada, boasted scarcely any residents except Moriscos.

Ever since the expulsion of all Muslims who would not convert to Christianity in 1502, the central government had striven to integrate those who remained. In 1526, while he resided in Granada (and sired Philip), Charles V presided over a commission that formulated a series of decrees (known as the *Mandatos*) aimed at Christianizing the Moriscos, but almost immediately he suspended them for forty years in return for a substantial payment from the community. The Moriscos secured this reprieve largely because the Turkish conquest of Hungary and war with France made Charles both desperate for money and anxious to maintain domestic peace in Spain; and when the forty-year term expired in 1566, with another Ottoman offensive in progress as well as rebellion in the Netherlands and New Spain, the chances of renewing the suspension seemed similarly propitious. Unlike his father, however, Philip refused. Instead, Espinosa and his committee issued a proclamation in both Arabic and Castilian commanding the enforcement of 'the Mandatos of the Emperor Charles V in the year 1526': all Moriscos must abandon their dress, language, customs and religious practices within one year, on pain of fines and imprisonment.[15]

Faced with this comprehensive attack on their lives and liberty, a group of Moriscos began to plan a major insurrection – the first in Castile since the Comunero revolt – and on 24 December 1568, the inhabitants of almost 200 Morisco villages in the Alpujarras murdered local priests and other prominent Christians, while a task force made an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the inhabitants of Granada's Moorish quarter to join them. Since at this stage the insurgents scarcely numbered 4,000, a counter-attack by the local authorities scored some early successes; but they lost control of their troops, who committed atrocities that gave the rebellion a new lease of life. The king therefore appointed his brother Don John to supervise both military operations in the countryside and the deportation of all Moriscos from the city of Granada – but this too boosted the rebels' cause because many of the deportees fled to the Alpujarras, where at least 4,000 volunteers from North Africa joined them. The rebels now started to raid Christian outposts on the coastal plains, forcing Philip to recall some veteran troops from Italy to regain control.

Reviewing the budget for the 1569 campaign gave the king pause for thought – 'No one who has not experienced war themselves would believe what it requires' – but, he reassured Espinosa (incorrectly), 'it seems that this war will not cost as much as the others in which I have participated'.[16] When the revolt dragged on into 1570, Philip decided to go to Andalusia in person, entering Córdoba on horseback, advancing through the crowds in majestic

circles so that everyone could see his self-confidence (and his horsemanship). Since this display did not suffice to end the war, the king sent an emissary into the Alpujarras to negotiate, and in May the rebels 'surrendered, handed over their standard, and submitted themselves to His Majesty's mercy'.[17]

As the king's Dutch opponents would soon discover, submission 'to His Majesty's mercy' was a high-risk strategy, and six months later, according to a pre-arranged schedule, his officials herded some 50,000 Moriscos into designated hospitals and churches. To create a false sense of security among the deportees, Philip ordered those supervising the operation to explain that the war had caused such devastation that 'it is impossible for them to survive' in the kingdom of Granada.

> For the time being the Moriscos will be removed from there and taken to Castile and other provinces where the harvest has been abundant and the war has caused no damage, so they can be fed and maintained properly for the coming year, while we consider when and how they can return.

This, of course, was totally false – the king had already decided that no Moriscos would ever return to Granada – but (as with Montigny) he regarded telling lies as the essential prerequisite to a favourable outcome. In the event, a quarter of the deportees died during the following two months, either of hunger as they marched in the rain and snow or by drowning at sea when storms struck the galleys on which they travelled. According to historian José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, 'In one way or another, the war of Granada caused the death of at least 90,000 people.'[18]

Deportation formed only half of Philip's solution to the Morisco problem. He also confiscated the deportees' lands and invited inhabitants from other parts of Spain to come and settle on them. A new council for the Repopulation of Granada surveyed the confiscated property and redistributed it among the new settlers, offering incentives and granting them tax relief and subsidies until they could sustain themselves on their new lands. By 1598 some 60,000 immigrants had settled in 250 Granadine communities.

This complex process of ethnic cleansing testified to Philip's vision and power: no other Western ruler of his day could have coordinated the movement of so many people in such a short time. And yet the venture failed. Many rural areas in Asturias and Galicia were abandoned or ruined when their more energetic settlers left for Andalusia. Nevertheless, there were never enough settlers: the kingdom of Granada as a whole lost about a quarter of its pre-war population while the Alpujarras region, with almost 6,000 families according to the census of 1561, had fewer than 2,000 in 1587. Moreover, although ethnic cleansing permanently removed the risk that an Islamic 'fifth column' in southern Spain

might welcome Ottoman or Maghrebine invaders, northern towns liberated from Muslim rule centuries before suddenly acquired a 'Moorish Quarter'. An analysis of the DNA of Spain's current population shows that although chromosomes normally associated with people of North African descent are almost totally absent from eastern Andalusia they are relatively common (up to 20 per cent) in Galicia, León and Extremadura.[19]

Lepanto: 'The greatest victory since Moses parted the Red Sea'

Despite Philip's prediction that the war in Granada 'will not cost as much as the others in which I have participated', it left him ill prepared to campaign in the Mediterranean after an Ottoman expeditionary force occupied most of the Venetian island of Cyprus in 1570. Venice desperately sought aid from the other Christian powers of the Mediterranean and found an enthusiastic advocate in Pius V, who saw the struggle as a crusade. The pope sent out envoys urging all Christian rulers to join a Holy League to save Cyprus and drive back the forces of Islam, but he pinned his chief hope on Philip.

The king demanded a high price for his support. Previous popes had allowed the kings of Castile to raise taxes on the Church for pious causes; and Philip exploited Pius's anxiety to create a Holy League to demand a renewal of all these taxes, known as the 'Three Graces', and an improvement in the terms. His ambassador in Rome told Pius in March 1570 that 'unless His Holiness immediately conceded' the Three Graces 'it would make the venture impossible, because without these and other concessions [His] Majesty could not even ensure the defence of his own dominions, let alone at the same time undertake a major war like this one'. The blackmail worked: Pius made so many generous financial concessions that, in the coarse phrase of Espinosa, 'His Holiness seems to have acted out a proverb that we have in Castile: the constipated die of diarrhoea.'[20]

Philip nevertheless retained his own agenda. He eventually agreed to join the Holy League only because he expected that, as the most powerful partner, he would be able to use the combined fleet to recover Tunis, not Cyprus, and when it became clear that he might not get his way, he sought ways to back out. 'To tell you the truth, I do not regret that we have not yet signed' the League, he confided to Espinosa, because 'as things currently stand',

> I do not believe it will ever achieve any success. It is not possible to deliver what I have promised, not only this year (which is totally impossible) but also in future years because even four time the 'Graces' I have been conceded would not suffice for that . . . Even if we gain prestige by joining the League now, it will be a very different story if we fail to honour our commitments.[21]

After much hard bargaining, in May 1571 Philip agreed to pay half the operational budget of the Holy League, while Venice, the Papacy and the other participants provided the rest; and Don John of Austria now took command of the combined fleet, which was assembling at Messina.

He arrived too late to prevent the Ottoman fleet from sacking Venetian settlements on the coast of Crete but in late September, having run short of provisions and acquired copious booty to sell, the Ottoman commanders decided to winter in the Gulf of Lepanto. They evidently assumed that their adversaries would not dare to commence operations so late in the campaigning season, but Philip had different ideas. He reminded the pope that 'this great concentration of infantry, cavalry, galleys and ships will be of little benefit or effect' if it merely defended its own bases, while 'raiding the coasts and lands of the enemy will not yield any fruit of importance'. Instead, the king argued, 'It would be best to gather as large a force of galleys as possible, enough to outnumber the enemy, and use it to optimal effect, which would be to seek out and destroy the enemy's main fleet, which constitutes the real threat.' The king evidently charged his brother with executing this daring strategy, because on 16 September Don John informed a political ally that his fleet was setting forth 'with the intention of seeking a battle, as you will see'.

> Many people over there argue that it is now too late in the year, and that the enemy will already have withdrawn anyway; others say that they never retreat, and will sally forth when they learn we have entered their territorial waters. In this fleet, enthusiasm for a fight is high, and confidence in victory no less . . . If you want to know any more, you can read about it in the history books![22]

Don John led the largest Christian fleet ever seen in the Mediterranean – 208 galleys and 30 other warships – to Corfu. When it found no Ottoman ships or garrisons to attack it dropped down to the Gulf of Lepanto, where it encountered the entire Ottoman fleet and prepared for action. Some 170,000 men fought in the battle of Lepanto on 7 October 1571, and although the forces of the Holy League suffered serious losses – at least 7,500 dead and 20,000 wounded (among them Miguel de Cervantes) – they won a stunning victory, capturing 130 Ottoman warships, 400 pieces of artillery and almost 3,500 prisoners. In addition they sank 110 Ottoman galleys and liberated some 15,000 galley slaves.

Was this 'the most memorable and happy event that past centuries have seen or that future centuries will ever see' (as Cervantes claimed), let alone 'the greatest victory at sea that has ever been' (as the naval commander Gian Andrea Doria asserted) or 'the greatest victory since Moses parted the Red Sea' (the verdict of Espinosa)? No: Cyprus remained in Ottoman hands, and the victors failed to execute the instructions of the Venetian Senate to 'remove from the

enemy, by whatever means, the potential to recreate his fleet'.[23] Yet had the great battle not been fought and won, the Turkish fleet would surely have left the Gulf of Lepanto early in 1572 and either conquered some Venetian outposts in the Adriatic or taken Crete. Instead, the Christian victory sparked uprisings in Greece and Albania, which for a time threatened Turkish control of the peninsula, and temporarily halted the westward advance of the Ottoman empire.

'To kill or capture Elizabeth'

The Lepanto campaign was not Philip's only crusading venture in 1571. No sooner had he agreed to sign the Holy League than he authorized the duke of Alba to invade England and overthrow Elizabeth Tudor. This dramatic policy change towards 'a sister whom I love so much' began two years before when the queen seized some ships carrying money from Spain to the Netherlands. Although the money was not strictly royal property, it belonged to a consortium of Genoese bankers who had agreed to lend the duke of Alba money to pay off his army. Philip's ambassador in England, Don Guerau de Spes, saw this as the prelude to a trade war and he urged both Alba in the Netherlands and Philip in Spain to confiscate English ships and goods. Both obliged, and Elizabeth promptly placed Spes under arrest. Earlier that year, Philip had expelled the English ambassador at his court, Dr John Man, a married Protestant cleric, on the grounds that his continued presence at court might offend 'God Our Lord, whose service, and the observation of whose holy faith, I place far ahead of my own affairs and actions and above everything in this life, even my own'.[24] The rhetoric disguised the fact that, without Man and Spes, Philip possessed no direct diplomatic channel through which to resolve disputes with England.

This anomaly increased Alba's influence over the king's policy. The duke had resided in England during the 1550s; he maintained his own intelligence network there; and, above all, he possessed his own strategic agenda. On the one hand, he never saw the point of replacing Elizabeth Tudor with Mary, Queen of Scots, whom many Catholics saw as the rightful ruler of England, because she had grown up at the French court and retained close relations with the French royal family. On the other hand, since the prosperity of the Netherlands depended on trade with England, Alba opposed any action that might jeopardize it. Curiously, although Philip recognized that his Dutch subjects 'always want to remain friends' with England, he never seems to have realized that Alba himself shared this view – even though it would torpedo his plans to overthrow Elizabeth.

In February 1569, outraged by the imprisonment of Spes and the confiscation of the Genoese treasure, Philip asked Alba to suggest how best to launch an outright attack on England. The duke refused: he replied forcefully that defeating

the prince of Orange had left his treasury empty, and so all funds for intervention in England would have to come from Spain – knowing very well that the revolt of the Moriscos would prevent this, at least for a while. Alba's intransigence made Philip more receptive to a proposal from Roberto Ridolfi, a Florentine banker who handled secret funds sent by the pope to the English Catholics. In 1569, Ridolfi visited Spes (despite his confinement) bearing a message from the duke of Norfolk and two of Elizabeth's Catholic councillors saying that they intended to force her to restore close links with both Rome and Spain.

The ease with which Ridolfi glided between the government's various opponents does not seem to have aroused Spes's suspicions, and early in 1571 he entrusted to Ridolfi an ambitious plan, for which he coined the term 'the Enterprise of England'. It called on Philip to persuade the other states of Europe to boycott all trade with England; to send financial support to Norfolk and his allies; and to fan the discontent of Irish Catholics. More radically, Spes suggested that the king should either support Mary Stuart's claim to the English crown or else claim it for himself. Ridolfi first went to Brussels, where he explained the Enterprise to Alba, whose suspicions were immediately aroused by the effortlessness with which Ridolfi had managed to leave England with incriminating documents. Nevertheless, he allowed the conspirator to proceed to Rome.

Ridolfi arrived at an auspicious moment. Pius V had recently issued a bull deposing Elizabeth and now sought a means to carry it out. For a while the Holy League distracted him but on 20 May, the same day that representatives of Spain, Venice and the Papacy signed the Holy League, Pius entrusted Ridolfi with letters urging Philip to support the Enterprise of England. Six weeks later, the king granted Ridolfi an audience. The Italian made a remarkable impression on the king: a few days later, when the nuncio urged the king to support the Enterprise, much to his surprise 'His Majesty, contrary to his normal custom [at audiences], spoke at length and entered into great detail about the means, the place and the men' that he would devote to it.

> He ended by saying that he had wanted and waited for a long time for an occasion and opportunity to reduce, with God's help, that kingdom to the [Catholic] faith and the obedience of the Apostolic See a second time, and that he believed the time had now come, and that this was the occasion and the opportunity for which he had waited.[25]

Philip proved as good as his word. In July he sent a secret letter to Alba affirming that Mary Stuart was 'the true and legitimate claimant' to the English throne, 'which Elizabeth holds through tyranny', and asserting that the duke of Norfolk

> has the resolve, and so many and such prominent friends, that if I provide some help it would be easy for him to kill or capture Elizabeth [*le sería facil matar o prender a la Isabel*] and place the Scottish queen at liberty and in possession of the throne. Then, if she marries the duke of Norfolk, as they have arranged, they will without difficulty reduce [England] to the obedience of the Holy See.

In the course of the next six weeks, Philip continued, Alba must therefore prepare a powerful fleet and army to carry this out. He promised to send immediately 200,000 ducats – but 'I warn and charge you expressly that you must not spend a single penny of this sum on anything else, however urgent it may be'. No doubt sensing how unrealistic all this would seem, Philip concluded that 'since the cause is so much His, God will enlighten, aid and assist us with His mighty hand and arm, so that we will get things right'. The king's enthusiasm increased as the festival of St Lawrence approached, when one of his ministers noted that 'His Majesty proceeds in this matter with so much ardour that he must be inspired by God'; and it persisted even after news reached him that Elizabeth had ordered Norfolk's arrest.[26] Even with experienced rulers, one must never underestimate the power of self-deception.

Philip alone

In his *History of Philip II*, Cabrera de Córdoba later identified 1571 as 'a fortunate year for the Monarchy', but by the time it ended Philip had managed to alienate virtually all his former allies. Unravelling the Ridolfi plot revealed to Elizabeth that her 'good brother' had planned to murder her. Not surprisingly, she never trusted him again and instead increased surveillance of all Catholics in England and executed those who proved obdurate (including the duke of Norfolk). She also supported privateering activity against Philip (a dozen major expeditions left England in the 1570s to plunder Spanish property) and provided material assistance to his Dutch rebels because, as Alba later pointed out, 'the queen knew full well that the king our lord had tried to deprive her of the kingdom and even to kill her'. He therefore 'regarded the queen as quite justified in what she had done and is still doing' to disrupt the Netherlands.[27] Philip's faith-based strategy had left a toxic legacy.

Philip also managed to alienate Emperor Maximilian in 1571. When intelligence reports suggested that France stood poised to intervene in support of a rebellion against the ruler of the small but strategically important Imperial fief of Finale Ligure, adjacent to Genoa, Philip mounted a surprise invasion. This unilateral action infuriated Maximilian, who mobilized the independent states

of Italy to condemn Philip's unprovoked attack. Empress María tried to mediate between her brother and her husband, assuring Philip:

> God knows how much I want to settle this accursed dispute over Finale, so that Your Highness need not exhaust yourself over it. I really believe that if it were not for the prestige that blinds us so much, the emperor would not act as he does, which is to importune Your Highness; but I am very confident that it will turn out as we wish, because Your Highness can see that the emperor does not lack good cause.[28]

Since Philip refused to 'see' this, Maximilian sent a special commissioner to reside in his duchy of Milan – also an Imperial fief – with orders to watch ostentatiously over the interests of the Austrian Habsburgs in Italy. This was a major humiliation, and it led Philip to withdraw his forces from Finale – but this recognition that 'the emperor does not lack good cause' came too late: Maximilian provided no assistance to Philip in 1572, when a new rebellion broke out in the Netherlands.

The war of Granada had greatly impressed the exiled prince of Orange. 'It is an example to us,' he confided to his brother early in 1570: 'if the Moors are able to resist for so long, even though they are people of no more substance than a flock of sheep, what might the people of the Low Countries be able to do?'[29] Since the prince knew that the 'people of the Low Countries' would not be able to tackle Alba and his Spanish troops alone, he worked hard to find allies. His agents forged links with the numerous communities of Dutch exiles – perhaps 60,000 men, women and children who had fled to England, Scotland, France and Germany to escape condemnation by the council of Troubles – and these exiles provided recruits for a fleet of privateers known as the 'Sea Beggars', sailing under letters of marque issued by Orange. The exiles distributed plunder taken by the Sea Beggars from merchant ships belonging to Philip's subjects and allies, thereby raising money for Orange's cause as well as sustaining his fleet. Meanwhile Orange and his brother Louis of Nassau fought with the French Calvinist leader Gaspard de Coligny, unsuccessful defender of St Quentin in 1557 and equally unsuccessful patron of the attempt to colonize Florida in 1565. Now Coligny persuaded Charles IX of France to recognize Louis and Orange as his 'good relatives and friends' and to pay them a subsidy.

King Charles also agreed that his sister Margot would marry the Protestant leader Henry of Navarre, and that as soon as the wedding had taken place Coligny and his Protestant followers could invade the Netherlands in support of Orange and the exiles. On the strength of this commitment, Orange laid plans for other invasions to coincide with the main attack by Coligny: the Sea Beggars, together with a squadron to be assembled at La Rochelle by Filippo

Strozzi, a Florentine exile with extensive military and naval experience, would capture ports in Holland or Zeeland; Orange's brother-in-law, Count van den Berg, would invade Gelderland with a small force from Germany; and Orange himself would raise an army in Germany and invade Brabant. The only problem lay in timing: everything depended on the date fixed for the marriage of Margot and Henry, but after frequent postponements in April 1572 Charles IX announced that the wedding would take place the following August.

The second Dutch Revolt

Conditions in the Netherlands could hardly have been more favourable to Orange's cause. The combined impact of raids by the Sea Beggars, the English trade embargo and war in the Baltic had caused a major economic recession: food prices soared just as thousands of families lost their livelihood. Nature intensified the misery: storms caused widespread flooding by seawater; ice and snow froze the rivers; and a plague epidemic ravaged the country. Alba pleaded with the king to send funds from Spain to provide relief but in February 1572 Philip replied, 'With the Holy League and so many other things that must be paid for from here, it is impossible to meet the needs of the Netherlands to the same extent as we have been doing up to now.' A month later he was even more insistent: 'It is my will that henceforth the Netherlands be sustained from the proceeds of the Tenth Penny.' Collection of the new tax must begin at once.[30]

Since the provincial States still refused to sanction the Tenth Penny, Alba decided to impose it without their consent. His officials started to register all commercial activity, and when in March 1572 some shopkeepers and merchants in Brussels ceased to transact business in protest, the duke brought detachments of his Spanish troops into the city – but to no avail: the shops remained shut and economic activity atrophied. Maximilian Morillon, Cardinal Granvelle's agent in Brussels, reported that 'Poverty is acute in all parts', with thousands in Brussels 'dying of hunger because they have no work. If the prince of Orange had conserved his forces until a time like this,' Morillon concluded, 'his enterprise would have succeeded.'[31] Morillon sealed his prescient letter on 24 March 1572. Just one week later, a party of Sea Beggars captured the seaport of Den Brielle in Holland in the name of William of Orange, and they flamboyantly declared that they would treat everyone well 'except for priests, monks and papists'.

Nevertheless, the rebel garrison of Den Brielle was small (perhaps 1,100 men, against the millions at Philip's command); the town was isolated; and it lacked fortifications. News that Strozzi's fleet at La Rochelle might launch an attack convinced Alba that the effective defence of South Holland and Zeeland required the immediate construction of a citadel at the largest port in the region, Flushing on the island of Walcheren, and on 29 March 1572 he

dispatched one of his leading military architects to the city with the necessary plans. For good measure he also sent a warrant to arrest the local magistrates, who had failed to start collecting the Tenth Penny.

The Tenth Penny epitomized all the disagreeable aspects of the 'new world' envisaged by Philip and Alba: it was unconstitutional; it was oppressive; it was foreign; and its proceeds were destined for the hated Spanish garrisons. In addition, it placed magistrates everywhere in an impossible position: those who complied lost control of their towns, and Alba dismissed those who refused. The Sea Beggars knew what they were about when they flew at their masthead flags showing ten coins. Philip nevertheless persevered. On 16 April 1572, before news of the capture of Den Brielle arrived in Spain, he again informed Alba that 'we cannot send you any more money from here', because 'my treasury has reached the state where no source of income or money-raising device remains which will yield a single ducat'. By then the citizens of Flushing had defied him – first by refusing to admit a Spanish garrison, then by murdering the engineer sent to construct a citadel, and finally by admitting the Sea Beggars. Philip immediately recognized the strategic importance of this development, since both he and his father had sailed to Spain from Flushing in the 1550s. 'It would be good', he wrote officiously to Alba,

> that if you have not already punished the inhabitants of those islands, and those who have invaded them, you should do so right away without allowing time for them to receive more reinforcements, because the longer the delay, the more difficult the venture. When you have done this, make sure that nothing like this can happen again on the island of Walcheren, because you can see what a danger it poses.[32]

Alba scarcely needed this lecture on strategy. He would no doubt have taken great pleasure in punishing 'the inhabitants of those islands', but in May the port of Enkhuizen in North Holland also declared for Orange and accepted a garrison of Sea Beggars, while Louis of Nassau and a band of French Protestants surprised the city of Mons in Hainaut, defended by powerful fortifications. The following month van den Berg and his German troops captured the stronghold of Zutphen in Gelderland, while Orange himself crossed the Rhine at the head of an army of 20,000 and advanced towards Brabant. Before long, fifty towns had rebelled against Philip and declared for Orange.

Facing so many threats, Alba now took a crucial decision: he refused to reinforce his hard-pressed subordinates in the northern provinces and instead withdrew their best troops southwards to await the expected French invasion – which never came. Although the wedding of Margot of Valois and Henry of Navarre passed without incident on 18 August, a few days later a Catholic marksman

tried to assassinate Coligny, but only managed to wound him. Fearing that the botched assassination attempt would provoke a Protestant backlash, Charles IX did nothing to prevent – and may have encouraged – a killing frenzy by the Catholics of Paris on St Bartholomew's Day, 24 August, that took the life of Coligny and most other Huguenots in the capital. The slaughter of the Protestant populations of a dozen other French cities soon followed.

These events transformed the situation in the Netherlands. As Morillon observed, 'If God had not permitted the destruction of Coligny and his followers, this country would have been lost'; and the prince of Orange agreed. The massacre, he wrote to his brother, was a 'stunning blow' because 'my only hope lay with France'. But for St Bartholomew, 'we would have had the better of the duke of Alba and we would have been able to dictate terms to him at our pleasure'. On 12 September the prince's attempt to relieve Mons failed, and the city surrendered one week later.[33]

Now Alba turned his attention to the other towns in rebellion, and since the campaigning season was running out he decided upon a strategy of selective terror, calculating that a few examples of unrestrained brutality would accelerate the process of pacification. At first the policy proved spectacularly successful. First his men stormed Mechelen, which had refused to accept a royal garrison and instead admitted Orange's troops, and sacked it for three days. Even before the screams abated, all other rebellious towns in Flanders and Brabant had surrendered. The duke now moved against Zutphen, which (like Mechelen) had defected to the rebels at an early stage, and sacked it. Once again, strategic terror paid off: Alba proudly informed the king that 'Gelderland and Overijssel have been conquered with the capture of Zutphen and the terror that it caused, and these provinces once again recognize the authority of Your Majesty'. The rebel centres in Friesland also surrendered, and the duke graciously pardoned them, but he resolved to make an example of one more town loyal to Orange in order to encourage the surrender of the remaining rebel enclaves. Naarden, just across the provincial boundary of Holland, obligingly declined a summons to surrender, and so (as the duke smugly reported to his master) 'The Spanish infantry stormed the walls and massacred citizens and soldiers. Not a mother's son escaped.'[34]

Almost immediately, just as Alba had anticipated, envoys from Haarlem (the nearest rebel stronghold) arrived at the camp; but, instead of offering unconditional surrender, they asked to negotiate. The duke refused: he demanded immediate surrender or else his troops would take the city and sack it. This proved to be a fateful decision. The rebels had put down far deeper roots in Holland and Zeeland than in the other provinces, and Haarlem (unlike Mechelen and Zutphen) boasted a hard core of Orangist loyalists: after declaring spontaneously for the prince, the city allowed a large number of exiles to return and take charge.

The new rulers promptly purged and reformed the town's government, closed Catholic churches and allowed Calvinist worship. All of those involved in thus flouting the king's authority in both politics and religion knew that they could expect no mercy if Alba's Spanish troops got inside their walls – and if any of them doubted this, they had only to consider the fate of Mechelen, Zutphen and now Naarden. Moreover, it was now December, the fields were frozen and the duke's forces were far weaker. The very success of his campaign had dramatically reduced the size of the Spanish army, both because the sieges and storms had caused relatively high casualties among the victors, and because each rebellious town recaptured, whether by brutality or clemency, required a garrison.

Alba now commanded scarcely 12,000 effectives: to besiege Haarlem, which boasted a powerful garrison and strong defences, with such a relatively small force would have been rash at any time. In the depths of winter, on tactical grounds this was an act of egregious folly. It was also an act of egregious folly on financial grounds. The war in the Netherlands had absorbed almost two million ducats in 1572, and the war in the Mediterranean cost almost as much – with the certainty of an increase in 1573 because in February, as the Spanish troops froze in the trenches before Haarlem, the Venetian Republic resolved to sacrifice Cyprus in return for peace with the sultan. Alba's intransigence towards the envoys from Haarlem had plunged Philip into his worst nightmare: a full-scale war on two fronts.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Years of adversity, 1573–1576

'The greatest and most important matter that I face, or could ever face'

By January 1573, Philip had lost confidence in the ability of the duke of Alba to suppress the Dutch Revolt and decided that finding an immediate and permanent solution to the Netherlands problem had become 'the greatest and most important matter that I face, or could ever face'. He therefore ordered Don Luis de Requesens, governor of Lombardy (and formerly his chief page), to leave immediately for the Netherlands to replace Alba and end the war 'through moderation and clemency'.[1] Almost immediately the Venetian Republic made a separate peace with the sultan, leaving Philip to withstand the Ottoman incursions in the Mediterranean virtually alone, and since Requesens demanded various favours before he would accept his new post, the king instructed Alba to make peace as soon as possible and at almost any price:

> It is essential that we bring affairs to a conclusion, as much to avoid the loss and destruction of those provinces as because of the impossible financial situation that we face. So I request and require you most earnestly to arrange things so that we may gain days, hours and even minutes in what must be done to secure a peace.[2]

As usual, the king's insistence on a radical change of policy 700 miles away proved totally unrealistic. The courier carrying this crucial dispatch only arrived in the Netherlands six weeks later – long after the fall of Haarlem, which would have afforded an admirable opportunity for clemency – and by then the Spanish army had begun to besiege Alkmaar, a town in North Holland recently fortified in the Italian style. 'I do not see this as a difficult enterprise,' Alba boasted, and indeed many of the town's inhabitants favoured surrender; but the duke once again insisted on unconditional surrender – and when his

artillery failed to open a breach in the town's powerful defences and his troops refused to launch an assault, he had to withdraw. For the first time, a Dutch town had successfully defied Philip.[3]

The king did not know what to do. In one of the tortuous holograph letters in which he pleaded with Requesens to go immediately to the Netherlands, he summarized the contradictory advice that he had received on the subject. Alba and his supporters, he wrote, saw the revolt as primarily religious and therefore impossible to end by compromise, whereas most Netherlanders 'take the opposite position and say that very few rebels acted for reasons of religion, but rather through the ill treatment they have received in everything, especially through the troops and most of all through the Tenth Penny'. They therefore contended 'that the solution to everything lies in mildness and good government'. The king confessed:

> With so many different opinions I have found myself in a quandary, and since I do not know the truth of what is happening there I do not know which remedy is appropriate or whom to believe; so it seems to me safest to believe neither the one group nor the other, because I think they have [both] gone to extremes. I believe it would be best to take the middle ground, although with complete dissimulation.[4]

Philip therefore prepared two contradictory Instructions for Requesens. 'You will see that those written in Spanish lean somewhat in one direction,' he explained, 'while those written in French very clearly go in the other.' The king apologized for the difficulties this contradiction might cause, but concluded feebly: 'I did not want to burst my brains emending them except for small things, because your real instructions will be what you see and learn when you get there.'[5]

Once Requesens arrived in Brussels in November 1573 and began to 'see and learn', he informed his master:

> There is no doubt that if we could pacify these lands just with force and troops, it would be best for the service of God and Your Majesty, and it would preserve your reputation better because you could do what you liked with them, so that using clemency at that time would be more admired.

Unfortunately, he continued, 'I find this rebellion in the worst state it has ever been', with a military stalemate, huge debts to the troops, an unsustainable operating budget, the risk of more mutinies and an army so widely scattered that it was out of control. Spain could not continue to tackle the rebellion in this way. Requesens went on to make a telling comparison. Three years before, Philip had

begun talks 'with the Moriscos of Granada, at a time when your position was more favourable than it is now here', and this had opened the way to peace. Requesens recommended doing the same now, because the king's opponents did not all share the same motivation. 'For the prince of Orange and many of those who follow him, religion was (and still is) the major issue,' Requesens argued, 'but I do not believe this is true for most people here. Rather, they [rebelled] because of the taxes imposed on them and the outrages they have suffered at the hands of your troops.' Requesens therefore recommended issuing a General Pardon to all those willing to live as Catholics under Philip's rule.[6]

Philip now tasked his council of State with discussing 'if this is the right time to issue a General Pardon, and if so what form it should take', as well as whether to open direct negotiations with Orange. One councillor reminded his colleagues that 'if we try to proceed with harsh measures, the war will last longer than we think' – a telling criticism of Alba's claims that total victory lay just around the corner. Everyone agreed 'that we must issue a General Pardon'; they also agreed that 'Your Majesty should revoke the Tenth Penny and abolish the council of Troubles, which everyone in the Netherlands hates so much'. Like Requesens, the councillors drew some telling parallels, including the measures taken by Charles V half a century before, suggesting that the king should announce all his concessions at the same time, 'as was done in Valladolid during the Comunero revolt'. Finally, the council recommended granting Requesens discretion 'because he is the man on the spot, and knows what is happening from hour to hour; so he can see better than anyone what is best for the service and authority of Your Majesty.'[7]

After much heart-searching, in May 1574 Philip accepted this advice. He authorized Requesens to abolish both the new taxes and the council of Troubles, and sent him four different versions of a General Pardon, with full discretion to promulgate the text he judged most appropriate. Requesens chose (as Philip duly noted) 'the version modelled on the one for Comuneros of Castile'. It excluded only 144 rebels.[8]

War on two fronts

Why, then, did these concessions not end the Dutch Revolt whereas similar ones had ended the Comunero uprising fifty years before? From Italy, Cardinal Granvelle put his finger on the central problem: suspicion. 'I know the nature of those people,' he warned. 'Many Netherlanders have sinned through weakness, others through fear, and others still because they were pressured to do so': it would be difficult 'to remove their fear and suspicion that at some future date they will be put on trial and punished'. Indeed, the cardinal quipped, 'even if Christ himself arrived to govern them, they would still complain and make

demands'. In Madrid, another minister pointed out to Philip an essential corollary to issuing the General Pardon: 'It is essential to send funds together with these concessions, because if we show military weakness, the Dutch will believe that you gave way because you had no choice.' Requesens commanded 60,000 men, which 'is more than enough to conquer many kingdoms – but not to crush all the heresy and wickedness that exist in the rebellious towns'. Moreover, those 60,000 men all had to be paid, on top of the money required to fund the Mediterranean war and all the other needs of the Monarchy.[9]

Some ministers advocated solving this financial dilemma by scaling back the war in the Mediterranean so that Philip could concentrate his resources on recovering the Low Countries, but the king disagreed: 'The sultan has mobilized more forces and is so angry with me' that rather than waiting for the inevitable Ottoman attack, and then trying to respond, it would be more effective and also cheaper 'to proceed with the campaign we have planned, which will maintain our reputation and also restrain the Turks, France, and the independent states of Italy, which might dare to do something if they detect any weakness in me'. In addition, abandoning the campaign would mean 'forfeiting the 800,000 ducats, more or less, that have already been spent'. By contrast, the king predicted optimistically, for just a few ducats more Don John of Austria and his fleet might score another victory.[10]

Philip changed his mind when news arrived that Venice had concluded a separate peace with the sultan, and hastily sent agents to Constantinople with powers to conclude a truce; but he still allowed the campaign to go forward. In October 1573 Don John launched a surprise attack that captured Tunis and neighbouring Bizerta. The arrival of this news in Constantinople naturally brought all talk of a truce to an abrupt end, which placed Philip in an extremely serious situation. When in April 1574 Don John sought permission to 'set forth with the fleet to prevent the enemy from achieving anything', his brother refused and instead ordered him 'to go to Milan until further orders, there to monitor developments in all areas and to respond accordingly'.[11]

The first development occurred in the Netherlands, where Louis of Nassau invaded again at the head of an army raised in Germany. Initially fate smiled on Philip: the Spanish veterans sent by Requesens to intercept the invaders routed them at the battle of Mook, but the victors promptly mutinied for their wage arrears and occupied Antwerp, which they held to ransom for six weeks until they received satisfaction – at a cost to the king of some 500,000 ducats. Requesens immediately grasped the deleterious consequences of these prolonged disorders, complaining to a colleague that 'it was not the prince of Orange who had lost the Low Countries, but the soldiers born in Valladolid and Toledo who had driven money out of Antwerp and destroyed all credit and reputation'. Requesens claimed that 'within eight days His Majesty would not have anything

left here', and he told Philip that even if 'it was not the Original Sin of this country to hate [all Spaniards], these mutinies by our own troops, and the damage they cause, would suffice to make us loathed here'. Granvelle, for his part, predicted pessimistically (but accurately) that 'if we fail to gain the goodwill of those provinces, they will eventually ruin both Spain and the reputation of His Majesty'.[12]

Once 'the soldiers born in Valladolid and Toledo' had returned to obedience, Requesens launched them against the city of Leiden, judging that its capture might fatally weaken the rebels because it would separate North Holland from Zeeland. Leiden did not boast state-of-the-art defences like Alkmaar, and the Spaniards managed to seal it off from the outside world with a chain of blockhouses. Then, in late September, as the starving city prepared to surrender, Orange gave the order to open the sluices and dikes to allow a fleet of shallow barges to bring relief. Although this stratagem failed, as the waters rose 'a great and sudden fear possessed the Spanish infantry', who unexpectedly abandoned their posts and fled. For the second time, a Dutch town had successfully defied Philip.[13]

Alternative strategies: fire, flood and a fleet

Requesens and his senior commanders now suggested to the king that 'since the defiance and rebellion of the people of Holland persist, we must burn and destroy all the villages and fields' on whose crops the towns depended, and also consider the possibility of 'flooding this country, since it is in our power', given that many areas in revolt lay below sea level.[14] Philip gave careful consideration to both of these indirect strategies. 'It is very clear,' he informed Requesens, 'that the severity, wickedness and obstinacy of the rebels have reached the level where no one can doubt that they are worthy of a harsh and exemplary punishment.' He recalled that the duke of Alba had suggested 'burning them out' (standard military practice in enemy territory) and 'if it had been the land of another prince, the duke would have done it without consulting me and he would have done well; but he held back, because it was mine, and likewise I refrained from giving the order'. But now, seeing that the rebellion continued,

> it seems appropriate to use the ultimate, rigorous punishment. We suppose that this could be done in one of two ways: either flooding the said villages and countryside, or by burning them, although we would gladly avoid both. However the wound is already so cancerous that it is necessary to apply strong medicine, and to apply very strong pressure, because it is clear that by letting the rebels enjoy the produce of the earth . . . [they can] sustain the war as long as they want.

Concerning which of the two strategies to implement, the king admitted:

> Flooding Holland could be achieved easily, by breaking the dikes; but this method brings with it a big disadvantage: that once broken it would result in their loss and destruction for ever, to the evident detriment of the neighbouring provinces . . . In effect, this method cannot be used, nor should we use it, because (in addition to the disadvantages mentioned, which are great and manifest) it would bring with it a certain reputation for cruelty that should be avoided, especially among vassals, even though their guilt is notorious and the punishment justified.

Instead, Philip continued, 'burning is better, because (in addition to its use being appropriate in warfare) it can be stopped' as soon as the rebels 'beg for the mercy that I would wish to grant them. And in this way, we would swiftly achieve the end that is desired.'[15]

Although the strategic use of terror might have succeeded, as with the king's 'clemency initiative' the previous year his change of plan came too late to be effective. Anticipating a favourable decision, Requesens had already sent Spanish units into the rebel heartland to break a few dikes and torch some farms; but after a few days, the veterans threatened that unless they received their wage arrears at once they would abandon their posts. Since Requesens could find neither the money nor replacement troops in time, in December 1574 the Spanish garrisons left North Holland, never to return.

The king showed admirable analytical rigour in evaluating these two 'indirect strategies' – burning or flooding – but he failed to do the same with a third initiative designed to defeat the Dutch rebels: creating an Atlantic fleet. 'Since the day I assumed responsibility for this war', Requesens claimed, he had 'often written' to his master that 'it is impossible to end this war without warships sent from Spain'. Philip acted on this suggestion in 1574. He had over 200 ships seized in the ports of Cantabria and instructed Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, who had successfully expelled the French from Florida, to equip the best of them with ordnance and munitions ready 'both to clear the Channel of pirates and to regain some of the Dutch ports occupied by the rebels'. The king also raised 11,000 soldiers to serve on the new fleet.[16]

These orders reveal Philip's lack of strategic and operational experience. First, it took months to locate and load the artillery and other equipment required to turn any embargoed merchantman into a fighting ship so that, as Menéndez crudely stated, creating a suitable fleet 'could take several years'. Moreover, once in northern waters, a large fleet from Spain would need a suitable harbour in which to shelter in case of need, and Philip no longer controlled one. Finally, when news reached him that a large Turkish fleet had

left Constantinople for the west, the king ordered Menéndez to keep close to Spain, so that his fleet could 'assist where it was most needed' – in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean, depending on the circumstances.[17] In the end it made no difference: in September 1574 an epidemic decimated a large part of the expeditionary force, killing Menéndez, and Philip cancelled the entire expedition. He had squandered over 500,000 ducats on it – all for nothing.

Between a rock and a hard place

Although his other realms made substantial contributions, Castile provided the lion's share of the budget for both of Philip's wars, and although the totals in Figure 13 are massive, they record only the money *received* by Philip's armed forces abroad from Castile, not the money that the kingdom actually *provided*: his treasury also had to pay transport charges and interest. In February 1574, officials calculated that Castile had spent 22 million ducats on the Netherlands since the duke of Alba left the court seven years before; and now defending the Mediterranean cost almost as much as fighting the Dutch.

Money received from Castile (in ducats)

Year	By the Mediterranean Fleet	By the Army of Flanders
1571	793 ,000	119,000
1572	1,463 ,000	1,776,000
1573	1, 102,000	1,813,000
1574	1,252,000	3,737,000
1575	711,000	2,518,000
1576	1,069,000	872,000
1577	673 ,000	857,000
Total	**7,063,000**	**11,692,000**

13. The cost of war on two fronts, 1571–7. The cost to Spain of defeating the Turks at Lepanto in 1571 remained relatively low, thanks to contributions from Philip's Italian dominions as well as from his allies, but the campaign of the following year, although it achieved nothing, cost twice as much. After Venice made a separate peace with the Turks in 1573, Philip's subjects had to shoulder almost the entire burden of Mediterranean defence. At the same time, the cost of suppressing the Dutch Revolt soared. Since the total revenues of the crown of Castile barely exceeded six million ducats, of which half went on servicing previous loans, the treasury quickly ran up huge debts. In September 1575 Philip issued a 'Default Decree' suspending all payments.

The haemorrhage of funds on this scale could not continue, and Philip authorized two remedial measures: he summoned the Cortes of Castile and asked them to vote new taxes, and he set up a secret committee (later known as the Junta of Presidents because it included the presidents of several councils) 'to discuss all major fiscal matters'. Initially the king considered chairing the junta himself, but 'my normal duties do not allow me to do this'; instead, he entrusted the task to Diego de Covarrubias, who had succeeded Espinosa as president of the council of Castile, and therefore as royal spokesman in the Cortes. Philip warned Covarrubias that solving the financial crisis was 'the most important item of business that there could be, because I believe the conservation of religion and of Christendom largely depend on it – and this worries me far more than if it affected just me'. The king lamented that 'everything is in such a state that, unless we find and provide a remedy, I cannot but fear that [my entire Monarchy] will collapse very soon'; and he believed that enabling 'my treasury to fund all ordinary and extraordinary expenditures' required three things:

> First, finding new revenues, since there is now so little – or, more accurately, nothing – to fund what is necessary. Second, dealing with the bankers who are charging interest, to ensure that they cease and do not consume all our resources, as they are doing now. Third, rescheduling my debts.[18]

After reviewing a mountain of papers, the Junta of Presidents estimated that the king owed at least 35 million ducats on loans that needed to be rescheduled, and it proposed that the Cortes increase the sales tax (*alcabala*) levied on certain goods, but at the same time devolve collection to the principal cities of Castile in return for an annual lump sum paid in advance. Although the Cortes did not rule out this proposal, it demanded numerous other concessions: the suppression of all taxes imposed by the crown without the consent of the Cortes; restrictions on the export of bullion from the kingdom; and a promise that the king would not alienate to bankers the revenues freed up by rescheduling his debts in return for new loans. When Philip refused to make all of these concessions, the deputies declared that they needed new instructions from the towns they represented, forcing the king to suspend the session.

The intransigence of the Cortes of Castile, combined with the death of several trusted advisers (Feria in 1571, Espinosa in 1572, Ruy Gómez in 1573), seems to have convinced Philip that since he could not understand his financial situation himself he needed to find someone who could. 'I see no alternative to granting someone oversight in all treasury matters,' he wrote early in 1574, and he turned to Juan de Ovando, priest, inquisitor and a disciple of Espinosa, who as president of the council of the Indies had rationalized the crown's efforts to govern America.[19]

Ovando soon submitted to Philip a series of documents that analysed Castile's underlying financial problems. First, he proposed that, as an emergency measure, all the crown's fiscal officers should report to him while he alone would report directly to the king, streamlining both the formation and implementation of policy. Ovando next explained the current fiscal problems in a form that even Philip could understand, written in unusually large script and using only simple terms, as if for a child (see plate 36). It began: 'In order to understand and make use of the Royal Treasury, we need to consider four basic things':

1. 'What do we have?' Ovando estimated that the annual revenues of the crown of Castile amounted to less than six million ducats.
2. 'What do we owe?' The total came to over 73 million ducats.
3. 'What do we have and what do we lack and need?'
   Ovando hardly needed to state the obvious, but he did so anyway: 'We can see that we owe far more than our income, and we lack everything that we need.' Specifically, the royal household and local defence absorbed almost 100,000 ducats a month; interest on government bonds required a further 250,000 ducats; while maintaining 'armies and navies strong enough to oppose and defeat our Ottoman and Protestant enemies' required over a million ducats a month. Ovando estimated the treasury's commitments for the year 1574 at almost 50 million ducats whereas its income, he reminded his master, was less than six million.
4. 'How and where can we fill the gap?' Surprisingly, Ovando did not suggest reducing expenditure 'to oppose and defeat our Ottoman and Protestant enemies, because unless we defeat them, they will surely defeat us'. Instead, he proposed two ways to fund the king's existing policies: raising income and reducing debt payments. For the former, he favoured further increases in the *alcabala* as well as seizing all silver and gold aboard the next fleets to arrive from America. To reduce debt payments, he recommended not only unilaterally lowering the interest rate on all government bonds but also issuing a Default Decree (*Decreto de Suspensión*) that would freeze both the capital and accrued interest on all loans signed with bankers since 1560, forcing lenders to accept low-interest bonds as repayment. Ovando insisted that all these measures must take effect simultaneously: the Cortes should increase the sales tax at the same moment as the king issued the Default Decree and his officials in Seville confiscated the treasure.[20]

While he pondered Ovando's solutions, Philip strove to secure divine favour. When news arrived that Louis of Nassau was about to invade the Netherlands while a Turkish fleet seemed poised to avenge the loss of Tunis and Bizerta, the king urged the clerics of Castile to pray for a miracle, since one was 'so

necessary, as you must know. I hope this will lead Him to pity us, since the cause is His.' He also prepared to revise his testament, because although 'I hope that God will give me life and health, which He can use for His service, it is good to be prepared, and if things go as badly in the future as they are going now . . .' – the king scratched out the rest of his sentence (a very rare event in his correspondence).[21]

In mid-May 1574, news that mutinous Spanish troops had entered Antwerp, and were holding it to ransom, deepened the king's despair. 'Unless God performs a miracle, which our sins do not merit, it is no longer possible to maintain ourselves for [a few] months, let alone years; nor can life and health withstand the anxiety caused by this, and by thinking of what may happen – and in my lifetime.' Two days later he wailed: 'These are things that cannot fail to worry me and make me anxious'; and two weeks later, he again concluded that only divine intervention could save Spain: 'I believe the moment that I have always feared has arrived, through lack of money. I fear that we cannot find a remedy in time unless it comes from God, who can do everything, and that is what I hope for and what sustains me – although I do not think we deserve it.' By the end of May, even those faint hopes had dissipated:

> I fear that our lack of money means that the rebels will not want to negotiate or anything, and I am as sure as is possible in these circumstances that the Netherlands – and even the rest of the Monarchy – will be lost, although I hope that God will not permit or wish it because of the harm it will do to His service . . . It is a terrible situation and it is getting worse every day.[22]

When yet more bad news arrived in June 1574, Philip lamented anew that 'I am thinking that everything is a waste of time, judging by what is happening in the Netherlands, and if they are lost the rest [of the Monarchy] will not last long, even if we have money'. The following month, he repeated the same refrain:

> The Netherlands are very much at risk, with so many troops and no money to pay them, and so we must send financial help without delay. Our affairs there cannot be improved without money unless God performs a miracle . . . Once we lose the Netherlands, however many millions we might have here will not suffice to prevent the loss of all the rest [of my dominions].

When neither miracle nor money materialized, the king sighed: 'We are running out of everything so fast that words fail me.'[23]

At least Philip scored one partial success. In August 1574, he made a peace that restored diplomatic and commercial relations with Elizabeth Tudor and

obliged both parties to desist from assisting rebels against the other – but almost immediately he allowed Inquisitor-General Don Gaspar de Quiroga to nullify one of its advantages. At a meeting of the council of State Quiroga argued that in order to avoid the 'contagion' of heresy, no Protestant should be allowed to set foot in Spain. Philip referred the matter to the Suprema, which opined that all future English ambassadors must be Catholics (or else the ambassador must allow his baggage and that of his entourage to be searched for prohibited books); and that they must revere the Holy Sacrament at all times, say or write nothing against the Roman Church and refrain from discussing Catholic doctrine. Any deviation would incur the normal penalties imposed by the Inquisition. The king supported this tough line, which perhaps encouraged Quiroga to harden his position: 'I say that the queen must not succeed in placing an ambassador here with the freedom to practise his creed in private'. Indeed, 'since the queen is who she is, we should not accept even a Catholic ambassador [from her]'. Once again, Philip sided with the Inquisition: there would be no more Tudor ambassadors in Spain, even though the lack of diplomatic representation increased the likelihood of another inadvertent lurch into war, as it had done in 1569 (chapter 11).[24]

Keeping the peace with England was essential to the security of the Spanish Monarchy because in autumn 1574, while the Army of Flanders abandoned the siege of Leiden, a Turkish expeditionary force recaptured Tunis. Philip's spirits sank even further. He began one rescript with a warning that 'today I am in a foul mood and fit for nothing', and when he read about unrest in some Castilian cities caused by the increased *alcabalas* he longed for death. 'Everything seems about to fall apart: how I wish I could die, so as not to see what I fear.' Upon opening two letters 'to be placed in the king's hands' describing new problems, he exclaimed: 'If this is not the end of the world, I think we must be very close to it; and, please God, let it be the end of the whole world, and not just the end of Christendom.'[25]

The road to ruin

Instead of the Apocalypse, the New Year brought the king a new problem: his brother. As soon as Don John heard that the Ottoman fleet had left Constantinople, he disobeyed Philip's express orders to remain in Milan. As he explained to Margaret of Parma, his half-sister and closest confidante: 'Everything is in a perilous state, my lady, although it is not entirely His Majesty's fault': the real problem was that their brother 'allows people to govern his dominions who do not take responsibility for anything that does not immediately affect them'. As a result, 'the money that takes so long to find is spent at the wrong time and the wrong place, with the result that it is wasted'. So, to save the situation, Don John

decided to disobey his brother: 'Without waiting any longer, I shall now go to Spain.'[26]

In a memorandum written in January 1575, shortly after his brother's unexpected arrival, Philip lashed out at virtually everyone around him. 'My head is so full of concerns and complaints from the people who are supposed to help me that I can scarcely contain myself. And all they do is raise fears and problems, as if I did not already know about them; and they provide no solutions, as if I were God and could provide them.' And then 'in comes my brother to tell me that nothing is getting done; and although he did not blame anyone, I was somewhat annoyed and I told him that nothing was getting done because there was nothing to do it with, and that we cannot do the impossible.' Finally, 'as I was writing this, they brought in this package from Juan de Ovando. Just consider: I am in no state to work out a reply, although I am sure there are some things here that require one. But I just can't.'[27]

Ovando had become used to his master's procrastination, but now his patience snapped. In March 1575 he sent a blistering analysis of how Philip had mismanaged his financial affairs. First, Ovando pointed to his own achievements over the previous year. 'Although the Royal Treasury had reached a desperate state', he had managed to raise and dispatch a million ducats to the Netherlands, and more than half a million to the fleet of the late Pedro Menéndez, almost another million to Italy, and loans worth over two million more for the campaigns under way. Ovando now contrasted these concrete achievements with the king's inaction, 'because you did not trust me, or any of your fiscal officers', and then he listed the various concrete proposals that he had made, only to have the king reject all of them. Ovando also denounced the relentless rise in the interest rates demanded by the king's bankers, noting that firms that had made loans in the 1560s at 8 per cent annually now demanded 16 per cent and sometimes more. He concluded that only a Default Decree could end the vicious circle.[28]

Before Philip could digest all this, news arrived that the Ottoman fleet was about to mount another campaign in the western Mediterranean. Just as in the previous year, he ordered his fleet to maintain a defensive posture, and impressed on Don John that if he decided to attack Tunis and Bizerta again, it must be to destroy them: under no circumstances should they be recaptured and garrisoned. Philip also ordered Requesens to adopt a defensive posture in the Netherlands. He authorized formal negotiations with the rebels, approving in advance numerous political concessions. He forbade only discussion of religious matters.

So many difficult decisions left the king exhausted. According to Don John, 'when I left court' in spring 1575,

> His Majesty was well, thanks be to God, but so tired by public affairs that you can see it in his face and his grey hair. I am very worried about him. The news from the court that I can share is certainly not good, because His Majesty has no one with whom he can relax, and so everyone is confused and our master is exhausted – and business is not dispatched with the same speed as at other times.

He did not exaggerate: Philip himself admitted that he felt 'so tired' that 'I really don't know how I survive'.[29]

Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, delegates representing the king, the prince of Orange and the States of Holland and Zeeland assembled in the town of Breda. No sooner had talks begun than Requesens noted that 'rumours are circulating throughout this country that if we do not come to some agreement, a general revolution will break out' – and, he gloomily predicted, 'I have no hope that we can reach an agreement because we cannot grant them any of the religious concessions that they ask.' Twelve weeks of discussion at Breda proved Requesens right. Just before he broke off the talks in July 1575, he wrote to a colleague: 'If we were talking about a peace that could be settled by transferring four towns or four kingdoms', a settlement could surely have been reached; 'but since everything depends on religion', peace was ideologically impossible. The war could not be won by conventional means, 'with all the debts we have, and so many soldiers here whom we cannot demobilize without pay nor maintain without much money'. In short, 'I do not know how we can carry on like this.'[30]

The conference at Breda proved an expensive error for the king. It strengthened the Dutch, because by agreeing to the talks Philip accorded his rebels a degree of recognition, while the experience of negotiating collectively increased their internal cohesion. Conversely, it weakened Spain, because the king's soldiers continued to earn wages even though they did not fight. Above all, it made nonsense of a decision taken by Philip in December 1574: that he would issue the Default Decree advocated by Ovando only the following September – a nine-month delay explicitly designed to permit Requesens to make one more attempt to crush the rebellion. Delaying the start of operations by three months in order to hold abortive peace talks ruined this prospect, too.

Nevertheless, the king stuck to his original timetable. Although in May 1575 he admitted that 'if the cost of the war [in the Netherlands] continues at its present level, we will not be able to sustain it, still it would be a great shame if, having spent so much, we lost any chance that spending a little more might recover everything' – the classic argument of a superpower in difficulties.[31] On 1 September 1575, however, he signed two documents: one froze the capital of all outstanding loan contracts worth between 15 and 20 million ducats (estimates varied wildly) and terminated all payments to his bankers; the

other ordered the rigorous audit of all loans made since 1560 to detect any fraud. For a few more days the king delayed but (as he explained to his ambassador in Genoa, where many of his bankers were based), 'although we have maintained secrecy about this, it has not been sufficient to prevent the bankers developing certain suspicions, which has caused much harm because they no longer want to negotiate with us or lend any more money'. On 15 September, printed copies of the decree went out to all revenue officers in Castile with orders to cease paying anything on 'the warrants that we have granted to merchants and bankers with respect to the loans and transfers we have arranged with them' and instead to send 'whatever they were due, and anything else' to the royal treasury.[32]

Initially, Philip was optimistic. He had 'created a special room and put in it a number of strongboxes' in the Alcázar of Madrid, ready to receive 'all the revenues collected in all parts of the realm' formerly assigned to paying loan interest; but others knew better. The Dutch rebels lit joyous bonfires and offered prayers of thanksgiving upon hearing of the decree; while Domingo de Zavala, an agent of Requesens at court, wearily explained to the king that even though he had managed to send to Antwerp a letter of exchange for 100,000 ducats, 150,000 more in silver coins by sea and a further 100,000 in gold coins via Italy, 'all of that together will not suffice to keep the war going for a single month'. Everything will be lost, Zavala continued, 'unless Your Majesty ceases to fund all other ventures and expenditures in order to concentrate' on the Netherlands, 'so that we can retain the provinces still loyal and shorten the war, because prolonging it will bring high costs and high risks'. In Antwerp, Requesens shared this pessimistic assessment, warning his brother in November 1575:

> The Default Decree has dealt such a great blow to the Exchange here that no one in it has any credit . . . I cannot find a single penny, nor can I see how the king could send money here, even if he had it in abundance. Short of a miracle, the whole military machine will fall in ruins so rapidly that it is highly probable that I shall not have time to tell you about it.[33]

Sent to the Netherlands under protest and left without clear instructions, Requesens claimed that the decree had broken his heart. It certainly broke his health and he died suddenly on 5 March 1576. The loyal Netherlands provinces, and the 60,000 royal soldiers fighting there, therefore came under the authority of the council of State in Brussels, composed of men with little aptitude for fighting a war – let alone for handling an army on the verge of mutiny.

Philip could do little to help them. The Default Decree proved a disaster for his foreign enterprises: 'It certainly has not led me out of my necessity,' he

lamented in March 1576, 'rather I stand in greater need since I have no credit and cannot avail myself of anything except hard cash which cannot be collected quickly enough.'[34] It also proved a domestic disaster. Philip's principal financial adviser assured him that 'ever since the publication [of the decree] all merchants lack credit and almost all trade in all commodities has ceased' in Castile; while 'nowhere, either within these kingdoms or beyond, can anyone find a large or small sum of money, unless they use coins, which is expensive and risky'. In addition, Mateo Vázquez reminded the king about 'the great distress in which Your Majesty's servants find themselves: it would break your heart to see how some of them are broken in spirit and ready to die of hunger'. The king's reply revealed his desperation: 'If God would only give us more time, we could deal with these issues, but with so little of it, we cannot do everything . . . Nothing could be worse than everything being in suspense like this.'[35]

Philip was wrong: there was indeed 'something worse'. In July 1576, the Spanish veterans, some of whom could claim six years of back pay, launched a surprise attack on Aalst, a town fifteen miles west of Brussels, and sacked it – even though it had always remained loyal to Philip. News of this atrocity caused widespread outrage, and in an attempt to restore calm the council of State in Brussels declared the mutineers of Aalst to be rebels against God and the king who could be killed on sight. The council also authorized the States of the provinces still loyal to the king to raise troops for defence against the mutineers. Then in September some of the soldiers raised by the States of Brabant arrested all the councillors; and the following day the States summoned representatives of the other loyal provinces to meet and authorize talks with their former colleagues in Holland and Zeeland, and with the Spanish mutineers, about ending the war. Representatives of the various protagonists assembled at Ghent to negotiate a ceasefire, using the issues agreed upon at Breda the previous year as their starting point, and by late October 1576 they had agreed to the terms of a ceasefire, deferring to a meeting of the full States-General the resolution of outstanding religious and political issues. Until Philip agreed to ratify the Pacification of Ghent, and recall the hated Spanish troops, the States refused to recognize the authority of his new governor-general, Don John of Austria.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The crisis of the reign, 1576–1577

Although Philip II governed for fifty-five years, his dominions enjoyed complete peace for only six months: between February and August 1577. This interlude came about because, after twenty-five years of continuous war, the king reluctantly authorized a ceasefire with the Ottoman sultan. 'It is extremely important to conclude this truce,' he stated: 'so much so that I do not know how we can survive without it.' With equal reluctance, the king also accepted that 'we must make all the concessions required' to reach a settlement with his rebellious vassals in the Netherlands after four years of 'the most deadly war that has been seen for many years'.[1] Although concluded at much the same time, the two initiatives had very different outcomes. Spanish and Ottoman diplomats repeatedly renewed the truce between their masters, bringing peace to the Mediterranean for the rest of the century; yet although the settlement with the Dutch was called 'the Perpetual Edict', after scarcely six months the king renewed the war.

For some time, matters hung in the balance. Philip pursued several initiatives that jeopardized the ceasefire in the Mediterranean (chapter 15), while hostilities resumed in the Netherlands primarily because of the complex relationships among three men: the king's half-brother Don John of Austria; Don John's secretary, Juan de Escobedo; and the king's secretary of state, Antonio Pérez. These three induced Philip to end the agreement he had concluded with the Dutch six months earlier – a decision with deleterious consequences for all concerned. Escobedo lost his life, Pérez his liberty and Don John his honour: all three would die disillusioned and discredited. Philip also paid a high price. He lost the services of three talented servants, but only after their antagonisms had polarized and eventually paralysed his entire government. In addition, Pérez would become the catalyst for the revolt of Aragon against Philip, the ally of his French and English enemies, and the author of savage criticisms of the king that enjoyed wide circulation. Worst of all, Philip lost the most favourable

opportunity to end the Dutch Revolt, and plunged the Netherlands into a savage war that lasted for thirty more years without intermission, compromising Spain's dominant position in western Europe and the North Atlantic. How could a monarch 'who has already dealt with public affairs for thirty-three years' (as Philip boasted at this time) make so many errors?[2]

A tale of two secretaries

Antonio Pérez was born in Madrid in 1540, the illegitimate son of Gonzalo Pérez, the cleric and royal official who soon afterwards became Philip's personal secretary. Antonio later claimed that his father had 'taught Philip the signature known throughout the world', *Yo el rey* ['I the king']; and given his humanist education and broad experience of public affairs, Gonzalo no doubt also taught his master many other things. When Philip became king of Spain in 1556 he appointed Gonzalo his secretary of state for foreign affairs, an office he held until his death in 1566, retaining the confidence of his sovereign to the end (chapter 8). Gonzalo also obtained a declaration 'that he was born in Aragon', a measure that half a century later would save his son's life.[3]

Young Pérez studied in the Venetian Republic and the Netherlands before returning to Spain around 1558 to take courses at the universities of Alcalá and Salamanca. He also learned much from his father, in whose office he worked from at least 1562. The fact that both Philip and Antonio shared the same preceptor may have formed a bond between them, but if so it was not strong enough to secure Antonio's immediate succession to his father's post, perhaps because the king disapproved of the young man's affair with Doña Juana Coello, with whom he had a child before they married in 1567. Antonio also faced the hostility of the duke of Alba, with whom Gonzalo had quarrelled in his last years, and the duke promoted his own protégé Gabriel de Zayas. Although Antonio eventually became secretary of state for Mediterranean affairs, while Zayas handled the affairs of northern Europe, henceforth Pérez was a member of the anti-Alba coalition of courtiers and ministers led by Ruy Gómez de Silva.

Juan de Escobedo, a member of the gentry born about 1530, belonged to the same coalition. In the 1550s he served as the confidential official of the duchess of Francavilla, no doubt thanks to some tie of kinship (the duchess addressed him as 'my cousin'), and he advised the duchess's only child, Doña Ana de Mendoza, who married Ruy Gómez. Escobedo served as a trusted messenger between members of the Mendoza clan until 1566, when he became secretary of the royal treasury. Seven years later, Ruy Gómez decided that Escobedo would be more useful as a link with Don John who, as victor of Lepanto and captain-general of the forces of the Holy League, boasted both enormous prestige and an annual budget of over a million ducats. Pérez approved of

Escobedo's appointment as Don John's secretary, telling the king: 'I believe he will be more useful at Don John's side because I see him as a restraining influence,' adding: 'I beg Your Majesty to excuse me if I am getting ahead of myself, but I do so because I know something about this matter.'[4]

This message reveals both Pérez's self-confidence when advising his master and the friendship between the two secretaries, which a courtier later stated 'could not have been closer or more firm between two men'. Pérez also forged a close link with Don John, who in 1571 told Pérez how much 'I wanted to come and kiss His Majesty's hands, and to spend lots of time with Señor Antonio Pérez'. Three years later, when Philip was considering how to distribute funds for the next Mediterranean campaign, Pérez suggested that he should just 'remit everything to Señor Don John, and let him allocate it and make the necessary arrangements in all parts'. Whenever he visited Madrid, the king's brother stayed in Pérez's sumptuous villa, 'La Casilla', on the outskirts of the capital on the current site of Atocha station.[5]

Escobedo soon became the principal intermediary between Don John and the king. Shortly after the secretary arrived at court in 1575 Philip complained that 'I am so fed up and tired' of dealing with Escobedo that 'we need to get rid of him at once'; and when he eventually left Madrid, Philip informed an Italian ally that Escobedo would tell him about 'the decision I have taken concerning the matter about which my brother Don John sent him here. I would be very grateful if you would keep it a secret.'[6] What was that secret matter that had made the king 'so fed up and tired'?

Don John: the next king of England?

Catholics from all over Europe flocked to Rome in 1575, a Jubilee Year, and a group of English and Irish exiles persuaded Pope Gregory XIII that both kingdoms could be won back for the faith by sending an expeditionary force of 5,000 soldiers from Italy directly to Liverpool under the command of one of their number, Thomas Stukeley. They optimistically claimed that the invasion would provoke a general rising of Catholics (particularly numerous in Lancashire), allowing Mary Stuart to escape from captivity, become queen of England and then marry Don John. Escobedo now went to Rome to make sure that the plan, once again code-named 'the Enterprise of England', enjoyed the pope's complete backing, and then to Madrid to secure 100,000 ducats and the king's blessing. Philip immediately sent half the subsidy requested but insisted that Stukeley and his men must not launch their venture until after Spanish forces had regained control of the Netherlands.

Late in 1575 Philip also resolved that his brother should replace Requesens as governor-general of the Netherlands, and he began to ponder whether Don

John should lead reinforcements up the Spanish Road to continue the war or travel virtually alone with full powers to make peace. He had not reached a conclusion when news arrived of Requesens's death in March 1576, making the immediate departure of Don John imperative; but now the king worried that his headstrong brother might procrastinate, negotiate, or even refuse to go. He therefore worked with Antonio Pérez to offer an irresistible bribe: if Don John went to Brussels and ended the Dutch Revolt, Philip would do everything possible to place his brother on the English throne.

The king wrote a letter to his brother that described the desperate situation in Flanders and the urgent need to find new solutions. He claimed that he wanted to return to the Netherlands in person to take charge of the situation; but since he must remain in Spain to mobilize the resources needed to sustain the entire Monarchy, and since only a member of the royal family 'as closely related to me as possible' could replace him, 'I have come to the conclusion that there is not, and could not be, anyone other than you', both 'because of the gifts God has given you and those you have acquired through experience'. Details of the irresistible bribe appeared in three other letters, all sent to Escobedo and signed by Pérez but in effect co-authored by the king. In the shortest of the three, 'Pérez' explained that Escobedo must show the other two to Don John and convince him to go, adding that if he succeeded in this, 'you will do His Majesty a great service and deserve a signal reward' – a dangerous promise that would come back to haunt its authors. In a second epistle, 'Pérez' required Escobedo to swear Don John to secrecy before delivering the king's letter to him and emphasized that 'this is not something that will suffer any argument or bargaining'. He also assured Escobedo that 'since so much is at stake for His Majesty in this matter, and since he wants to send his brother because he cannot go himself', Don John 'must believe that His Majesty will do and provide everything possible to ensure that he succeeds in what he will undertake': in other words, that Philip would support the Enterprise of England – another dangerous promise that would come back to haunt its authors.[7]

The third letter to Escobedo was even more remarkable, because it insisted that Don John go directly to Brussels without troops or advisers. 'I have revised this letter twice,' Philip informed Pérez, expressly so that his brother 'cannot turn me down', and he added a further note of blackmail to the draft with his own hand: Don John 'will fail in his duty to God if he fails in this', and also 'in his duty to his father, who loved those provinces so much and risked so much for them'. Indeed, the late emperor, now 'in heaven, would surely complain if he fails in this' (a threat that Pérez would scarcely have made himself!). This letter also stressed that once Don John had reached the Netherlands, he would be well placed to effect the Enterprise of England – and later, perhaps, even more:

> I was thinking, sir, that for the English venture that you discussed in Rome [with the pope], it would be no bad thing if Don John happened to be close by and engaged in something so important for His Majesty's service. In addition, I would like to see Don John hold some major office in which he had full charge of everything, so that His Majesty would see his true worth and the good account of himself that he would give in any task of government without the interference or rivalry of other ministers.

Philip raised no objection to these extravagant statements when he read and corrected the draft for the last time, and on 8 April 1576 the letters left Madrid for Naples, where Don John resided. Philip added in a postscript to his own missive 'how I wish that the person carrying this dispatch had wings to fly, and you too, so you could get to the Netherlands faster'.[8]

The king wished in vain: almost three months passed with no reply. Pérez played down the ominous silence from Naples, assuring his master in June that Don John would 'definitely submit himself to the will of Your Majesty', largely thanks to his own skill in 'mobilizing Escobedo'; but Philip proved to be a better prophet when he replied: 'I cannot help fearing that Don John is about to make some dreadful demands that will be hard to grant, such as wanting lots of money, lots of troops and lots of freedom.'[9]

The silence ended on 1 July, when Pérez abruptly informed the king that 'Escobedo has just arrived' at the palace, having 'ridden together [with me] from Alcalá, discussing the matters entrusted to him' by Don John.[10] What were these matters? And why did Pérez insist on riding with Escobedo for almost sixty miles – a two-day journey – before informing the king that the long-awaited messages had at last arrived?

Don John received the letters signed by Philip and Pérez at the beginning of May, and after brooding over his options for almost three weeks, he accepted his appointment as governor-general of the Netherlands. Nevertheless, as his brother had feared, before leaving Naples Don John dictated two sets of instructions for Escobedo, filled with demands to present to the king, some of them political (full powers, lots of money) and others personal (rewards for supporters; recognition of his daughter Juana as legitimate; and so on). Escobedo must also impress upon Philip the need for Don John to come to Spain and discuss in person the exact nature of his mission in the Netherlands and later in England. While he awaited the king's answer, Don John travelled to Vigevano, a town in Lombardy close to the border with Savoy. For a while, according to a Tuscan spy, everything suggested that 'he was about to travel to the Netherlands', but in July 'all talk of war turned into celebrations and tournaments', and Don John rode to Milan. Now, the spy observed, 'although letters from the court of Spain insist that he will go to the Netherlands, at present we see no sign of it here'. He

speculated that Don John would not leave until he received news from Escobedo that his brother had granted all his demands.[11] Although correct, the spy had uncovered only part of the story.

On 16 April 1576, one week after signing the letters (extensively revised by the king) intended to convince Escobedo that Don John must leave immediately for the Netherlands, Pérez wrote to provide his colleague with more details on his recent dispatches, 'all of which, except this one, His Majesty has seen'. This letter was both secret and subversive. Pérez began by revealing 'that everything that may have seemed to you insistent and harsh' in the letters of 8 April 'was added by the king in his own hand to the drafts that I had prepared'. But, Pérez continued:

> In my opinion, when it comes to obeying and leaving for Lombardy, and to sacrificing himself to duty, Don John should obey and leave and sacrifice himself to the will of his brother, saying that he has no other intention. Once he has done that, he should specify, inform and request the things that seem to him necessary for the success of the venture.

For 'Lombardy' – not for the Netherlands! Pérez advised this dramatic departure from the king's plan because if, when Don John reached Lombardy, 'the Low Countries are lost, or if the path to peace is blocked', the mere fact that he had left Naples as ordered would earn the king's confidence and gratitude; whereas if, by the time he got there, 'it seems that the arrival of Don John in the Netherlands in person' could save the situation, continuing on his journey would be 'a great service to God, to the Crown, and to his brother, and would win credit for himself'. In addition, 'as the world turns, you and your master would not be in a bad place for your own purposes and those of your friends'. Pérez's filled his letter with a conspiratorial 'we':

> Whatever may happen, in my opinion we must immediately obey and leave; and having done that let [Don John] respond, or ask, or advise whatever he wants, although let it all be for the advancement of the venture, not for personal items. For the rest, we may hope that Time will provide us with a thousand possible courses of action.[12]

Clearly, Pérez's instruction that Don John should sabotage Philip's plan for the salvation of his Monarchy by waiting in Lombardy instead of going to the Netherlands amounted to treason; and that no doubt explains why, when he learned that Escobedo had arrived in Spain, Pérez intercepted him at Alcalá and rode with him for two days 'discussing the matters entrusted to him' by Don John until they reached the Escorial on 1 July 1576: he needed to make

sure that Escobedo would not reveal the contents of his secret letter and that Don John had followed his advice and remained in Lombardy. Presumably Escobedo gave an affirmative response on both matters. The situation changed six weeks later, when at dawn on 12 August Don John suddenly left Milan for Genoa, where he had assembled a small galley squadron ready to 'carry him to Spain on some business of importance to the king our lord and the well-being of Christendom'. Ten days later he arrived at Barcelona, and immediately set out for the Escorial.[13]

The reason for this act of naked disobedience to the king's orders emerged only after Don John's death, when the Spanish ambassador in Rome asked the cardinal of Como, the pope's secretary of state, 'to share with me a secret, now that the people to whom he might have promised confidentiality are dead. I asked "What dealings and information did the late Don John have with His Holiness and with him"' concerning the Enterprise of England? The cardinal's reply contained sensational revelations: that he had written some 'very long letters' on behalf of the pope urging Don John to undertake the Enterprise; that Escobedo had gone to Rome, where Gregory 'had talked to him about it'; and that the cardinal had later written a letter to Don John on behalf of the pope when he went to Spain in 1576, tasking him with proposing the 'venture' to Philip. That letter, the cardinal repeated, 'exhorted [Don John] to go and propose the Enterprise to His Majesty in person, even though he lacked permission to go' to Spain. That is why Don John suddenly disobeyed his brother.[14]

Discord between the sons of Charles V

Don John's arrival at court took Philip completely by surprise. He had worked hard on a raft of concessions that he planned to entrust to a messenger who would arrive in the Netherlands at the same time as Don John. Once Escobedo confirmed that Don John would accepted appointment, Philip dispatched the messenger to Brussels with letters informing all his ministers that his brother would serve as the new governor-general, followed by his instructions for discharging this task and letters urging neighbouring sovereigns to maintain 'the same good relations and amity' with his brother as with his predecessors.[15] No sooner had he signed these letters than Philip learned that Don John was in Barcelona instead of in Brussels. Unable to conceal his rage, the king immediately scribbled the following message:

> Brother: Last night Escobedo gave me your letter and the news that you had arrived in Barcelona. I cannot refrain from telling you that much as I want and would like to see you and have you here, in view of the present situation

> and state of affairs, your decision has caused me such anxiety that it has removed a good deal of the pleasure that I would otherwise have felt.[16]

News of Don John's disobedience reached the king at much the same time as alarming news from Brussels. 'Developments in the Netherlands,' Philip complained on 29 August to Cardinal Quiroga, 'have made me so concerned and even anxious that I cannot always take care of other matters as I would like.' He sought advice on the quickest way to get his brother to Brussels, 'because if he returns the way he came, it will involve major delays. I was thinking that he could travel overland, under an assumed name, travelling at speed with just two or three others.' Quiroga opined that unless Don John left at once, with full powers to grant the Dutch all they demanded, 'they will create a republic with such advantages and with so much liberty that it would hardly be worth being their sovereign'. He suggested that the king should announce that his brother would travel via Italy in order to distract attention while he travelled through France 'at top speed, in disguise'. Quiroga continued perceptively (and prophetically) that 'although this will be very difficult, with each day's delay things [in the Netherlands] are going from bad to worse, so that all the effort and expense will have been in vain'. The king accepted this sombre logic. For optimal 'secrecy and dissimulation', Don John should leave court to visit Doña Magdalena de Ulloa, who had raised him, 'as he has always done when he has returned to these kingdoms from abroad', and from her house near Valladolid his brother could slip away to the Netherlands unobserved. And then, Philip concluded optimistically, 'his mission cannot go wrong, with God's help, and may He guide it, since it is done for His service'.[17] Philip wrote these words on 1 September 1576. Later that day, at the Escorial, the two sons of Charles V were reunited.

Don John's presence at court gave him an important advantage, and he lost no time in making the 'dreadful demands' that his brother had feared (page 232 above). Margaret of Parma had encouraged him 'to speak freely to His Majesty about everything, and reveal to him the naked truth about the current situation' because, 'as you have already discovered yourself on past occasions, once you leave you will not to be able to achieve either by letter or by intermediaries the same things that you can achieve easily now in person and in direct conversation'. Don John took heed, and refused to leave the court unless his brother guaranteed adequate funds to execute both of his missions: the pacification of the Netherlands and the invasion of England.[18]

Philip did his best to raise money but, not surprisingly, the bankers affected by the Default Decree refused to make new loans unless the king agreed to honour the old ones. 'I don't believe we will ever reach a conclusion,' the king lamented to Mateo Vázquez, whom he charged with drawing up a General Settlement (*Medio General*) with his bankers, 'and that we will pass the rest of

our lives in the shadow of this business'.[19] Nicolas Ormanetto, the papal nuncio, who had worked with Philip when he was king of England, seized this moment to insinuate that placing Don John on Elizabeth's throne would solve all Philip's problems; but the king remained cautious. 'No one desires more than me to see this matter take effect', he replied,

> because of the benefit that the conversion of that kingdom would bring for God's service and for the well-being of Christendom. When and how to undertake such a venture, however, depends on events in the Netherlands and on many other things and important matters like this require very careful evaluation.

Philip promised to continue to think about possible solutions 'although I see many difficulties'. The constant delays caused him 'so much grief and anxiety' that 'I don't know how I endure them.'[20]

Finally, on 18 October 1576, Don John declared himself satisfied. A paper written in the king's hand, apparently notes for the final meeting between the two brothers, listed the concessions that Philip was now prepared to make. To facilitate the attack on England, Philip authorized his brother to grant the Dutch demand that all foreign troops be withdrawn from the Netherlands, provided the Spanish veterans could leave by sea (which would permit Don John to lead them against England). The king also conceded that 'we must forget everything that has happened in the recent disorders, and take no account of what is past'. Furthermore, if Don John found upon his arrival in the Netherlands 'that affairs are in such a desperate state that [the Dutch] insist on getting everything they want, and will not accept anything less', then 'since we must extinguish this fire and avoid making those people absolutely desperate, you may concede everything that may be necessary to reach a settlement'. Philip struck only one note of caution: he rather pompously urged his brother 'to proceed with caution in love affairs, and do not thus cause offence to the [Dutch] elite'. Although the king was ready to sacrifice his sovereignty, he did not want any more illegitimate nieces or nephews.[21]

Don John now set out for Brussels, travelling somewhat ignominiously (as his brother demanded) through France disguised as a servant, with a single companion. He still harboured doubts that his brother would keep all his promises, and in his last letter written on Spanish soil he reminded the king: 'Now, sire, I may face a situation in which I have to respond with my own blood, if necessary, and so I now ask Your Majesty once more to do what I have asked: which is to send money, money and more money, because without that it would have been better not to have invested so much.'[22] Escobedo remained at court to maintain the pressure on the king.

Don John in the Netherlands

Don John's fears proved well founded: his departure from the court freed the king from the threat of blackmail, and now he callously changed his plans. On 11 November 1576 – scarcely three weeks after his brother's departure – he entrusted to Escobedo a set of tortuous and confusing instructions for Don John written in his own hand. The king conceded that 'this is the best opportunity we could expect to take the queen of England at a disadvantage, to withdraw my troops from the Netherlands without losing face and to perform a great service to Our Lord by regaining that whole kingdom for the Catholic faith'. Nevertheless he worried about 'the danger of beginning this venture without a sound foundation or the assurance of a favourable outcome, the difficulties that might arise in achieving success and the risks that might arise of stirring up Christendom and the whole world'. Therefore, he continued, 'under no circumstances can the Enterprise [of England] begin until the Netherlands are entirely pacified and peaceful so that there is no chance of any trouble there, however slight', because 'you can easily appreciate what a great error it would be to leave our own dominions in danger in order to try and gain others'. In addition, Don John must ascertain how much support he would receive from English Catholics, 'because no kingdom exists, however weak or small, that can be taken, or should be assaulted, without some help from within'. Finally, and most remarkably, the king stated 'You already know that the queen [Elizabeth] is in the habit of maintaining relations and contact with the people she believes she might marry; and perhaps by some devious means she may harbour some thoughts about you on this subject and open some communication. If this should occur, it seems to me that you should not avoid it but rather let it develop as much as she wants' in order to disguise with 'greater dissimulation' the planned invasion and conquest.[23]

Escobedo, with whom Philip discussed these instructions, warned that they 'will be so unwelcome that I am dreading my arrival, fearing that Don John will become so desperate when he sees what I have brought that he may take a catastrophic decision'.[24] He was right. When Don John read the documents brought by his secretary – so different from what he had been promised while at court – he concluded that his brother had faked enthusiasm for the Enterprise of England from the start solely to persuade him to leave Naples for the Netherlands. Feeling cruelly deceived, he now began to seek alternative strategies to achieve his personal goals.

Although Don John's resentment did not lack justification, it never seems to have crossed his mind that his own delays – first in Naples, then in Lombardy and finally in Spain – had undermined the Enterprise. By the time he arrived in Luxemburg on 3 November, the royal army in the Netherlands had disintegrated: of the 60,000 men whom Requesens had commanded in March, scarcely

11,000 remained, most of them mutinous. Worse still, the day after his arrival the Spanish mutineers in Aalst captured Antwerp, which they proceeded to sack: they destroyed more than a thousand houses and killed more than 8,000 citizens. This tragedy, soon known as 'the Spanish Fury', unleashed the 'general revolution' predicted by Requesens. Four days later, the States-General ratified and published the Pacification of Ghent, which brought the fighting to an end. They then sent delegates to secure approval of the agreement from Don John and, through him, from the king

Don John was well aware that he lacked the necessary skills for such a delicate situation. As he confessed to his cousin (and former governor-general of the Low Countries), Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, those who have to 'deal with people so committed to being insolent and impertinent' needed 'the spirit of an angel. Therefore I, who am less like an angel than most, suffer more than others.' Instead of cultivating 'the spirit of an angel', however, Don John concentrated all his energies on the Enterprise of England, for which he mobilized the pope, the English and Irish exiles, the French Catholics, Juan de Escobedo and Antonio Pérez.[25]

The two secretaries were involved from the start. While Don John was still at court, Philip complained that 'Escobedo is pushing hard in this matter [England], and I asked him to write down for me what he thought about it'. 'I see many difficulties,' he continued, 'even though Escobedo still thinks it will all be very easy.' Once Don John left for the Netherlands, Escobedo and Pérez became virtually the sole intermediaries between the king and his brother. When Quiroga, the councillor on whose advice Philip had previously relied heavily, asked the king for details about Don John's mission in the Netherlands, the reply was concise and dismissive: 'Antonio Pérez will tell you.'[26] Some years later, a courtier asserted that

> His Majesty trusted Pérez so much that he decided with him all the great secrets of state that monarchs have to resolve, and he sought and valued his opinion in all things . . . And because the person whom Don John of Austria most esteemed, and to whom he entrusted his affairs, was the same Antonio Pérez, he knew so much that he could maintain the balance between the two royal personages, each of whom trusted what he told them about what the other one wanted. He was thus able to serve in the role of double agent.[27]

And, indeed, an important change in Philip's administrative system at this time made it easy for the secretary to serve 'in the role of a double agent' if he chose.

Among the concessions Don John demanded before he agreed to leave court was that Pérez and not Zayas handle his Spanish correspondence with his brother. As the king later explained: 'I did not agree to this through lack of

confidence in Zayas, but because my brother demanded it so insistently, saying that he did not want to accept his appointment without this concession. Therefore I was forced to make it.' Not satisfied with this change, once he arrived in the Netherlands Don John questioned whether 'Your Majesty should allow my letters to be read by the council [of State]' at all; and without awaiting the answer, he demanded that 'they should be seen and discussed' by only two people: Pérez and Don Pedro Fajardo, marquis of Los Vélez, who had been at university with Pérez and like him supported Ruy Gómez de Silva against the duke of Alba. Philip accepted this suggestion too. Although he himself suggested one change – 'you might add the Inquisitor-General' (Quiroga) – he immediately added: 'You do whatever is best, Antonio Pérez'.[28]

Pérez welcomed the suggestion, and for the next eight months the letters received from Don John in the royal archives are endorsed 'Seen by the two [*Visto por los Dos*]' – that is, by Quiroga and Los Vélez. Since the letters that 'the two' saw depended exclusively on Pérez, whose officials deciphered all incoming letters from northern Europe, the three ministers served as Philip's sole sounding board on Netherlands affairs. In the words of an astute ambassador, 'they are everything, and everybody else is window-dressing'.[29]

It is now almost impossible to disentangle the respective roles of the king, his brother, Pérez and 'the two'. To begin with, Philip communicated some crucial decisions in meetings alone with Pérez that left little or no archival trace: as the king wrote just after he received some letters from Don John, deciphered by Pérez, 'Let us talk about this, because it is something better spoken than written about.' Moreover, Don John omitted some important details because 'they should not be written down in a letter that must travel by such a long and dangerous route'.[30] Finally, many of the secrets committed to paper were later deliberately destroyed. In 1576, in 1579 and again in 1590, Pérez burned a large number of letters, including those exchanged with Don John; the king also regularly burned confidential letters once he had read them. Don John did the same: he once warned a trusted correspondent, 'for greater security, I am in the habit of destroying your letters once I have replied to them' because 'in the end, papers are papers'. When he died, according to an executor of his testament, 'burning his papers and portraits caused great sorrow', but 'that is what he ordered so that is what we did'.[31] Despite these gaps in the surviving evidence, it is obvious that by allowing Pérez alone to handle his correspondence with his brother, Philip set himself up to be deceived. Henceforth the secretary opened, deciphered and summarized all letters received from Don John – even those 'to be placed in the king's hands'; and Pérez alone drafted all the consultas from 'the two' as well as the royal rescripts.

Having thus created an ideal environment for 'groupthink' (chapter 4), Don John, Escobedo and Pérez took several critical decisions to facilitate the

invasion of England despite the king's misgivings. In the Netherlands, Don John and his secretary arranged a ceasefire with the States-General in December 1576, and when the news arrived in Madrid, Pérez immediately did his best to convince his master that he must 'conclude matters on the best conditions possible, and quickly'. Shortly afterwards he repeated with the same certitude: 'what Don John and the service of Your Majesty need is to win back those provinces through a peace'.[32] It was not so easy.

The States-General contained over 200 deputies and they were seldom of the same mind. As Don John put it: 'Not only is it impossible to know from one hour to the next what will happen, but they link items of business together so that just when you think about announcing that something has been decided, they spend days discussing how to put the decision into effect.' He concluded angrily, 'The only thing they all agree on is to die in order to get what they want.' Escobedo went further, warning the king that some deputies wanted to 'form a republic, recognizing no superior', so that 'war is inevitable. Securing provisions and making preparations immediately would save a lot of time and money.'[33] He attached a budget suggesting that the war would cost 500,000 ducats each month.

Did Don John and Escobedo really believe that 'war is inevitable' or had they sent their pessimistic predictions and alarming budgets as a ploy to persuade Philip to make peace in the Netherlands and thus clear the way for the invasion of England? Whatever their intention, the prospect of renewing hostilities prompted the king to send an express letter in triplicate forbidding it: 'I must insist, brother, that you avoid a breach and that you accommodate yourself to time and necessity, which are the best guides you can have in such a difficult and desperate business.'[34] Two weeks later, Philip complained to Pérez that 'nothing my brother does is appropriate', because he and Escobedo 'still want war, and try to bring it on'. Should they succeed, he wailed, 'it will not be possible to provide what they need – and if we did, it would not leave enough to oppose the Ottoman fleet or to do anything else'. Then, almost in mid-sentence, the king changed his mind, recalling with approval the scorched-earth strategy proposed by Alba and Requesens as the best means to force the Dutch to negotiate. 'The only remedy I can see is that my brother gather as many German infantry and cavalry, together with the Spaniards who are already there (since we cannot send him any more), and let them destroy the country. What they get in plunder will be their wages. That's how we will reach an agreement' with the Dutch. He ordered Pérez to run this suggestion past 'the two', adding that 'Although this policy is not at all what I want, it would be better to retain provinces even though they have been ravaged than to lose them intact.'[35]

This unexpected suggestion stunned Pérez and 'the two', and they rejected it firmly, stressing 'the need to make the best deal we can, and the impossibility

of making war, and the great danger that would ensue for both the Netherlands and for Italy if Your Majesty begins hostilities'. The king backed away partially, but not entirely, from his draconian plan to destroy what he could not keep: 'If the States-General want war and not peace, we cannot avoid it. In that case, seeing that we lack the means to make war as we have done so far, we will have to proceed as I have said' – that is to carry out a scorched-earth policy. Now Pérez weighed in. 'We must charge Don John to procure a settlement by any human means possible,' the secretary insisted and, for greater effect, he invoked an alarming domino theory. If war broke out again in the Netherlands, 'I greatly fear that all its neighbours and all Germany will rise up against Your Majesty's forces'; moreover, the king should remember 'the great dangers that may arise both here and in Italy'. Indeed, he continued relentlessly, 'we should fear that even these realms may weary of being bled white for such a lost cause'. The moral was clear: 'It is necessary to avoid a breach and instead persevere with the talks.' The king crumbled under this verbal spanking: 'All this is well said and well argued,' he conceded. 'I just wish it was not true.'[36]

Philip therefore instructed his brother (as Pérez and 'the two' had urged) to avoid resuming hostilities at all costs. 'I do not know how we could provide as much' as 500,000 ducats a month in the Netherlands, he wrote, 'even if we had nothing else to fund except that; and since war on such a scale is out of the question, because everything has been spent and exhausted, it is imperative that our policy coincides with our power'. Don John must make peace on the best terms available.[37]

As it happened, the king wrestled with his conscience in vain; the decision had already been taken. On the same day that he, Pérez and 'the two' debated their options in Madrid, Don John signed an agreement with the States-General known as the Perpetual Edict, which confirmed the Pacification of Ghent, and he ordered Escobedo to raise enough money to persuade the Spanish mutineers to leave the Netherlands within a month, as the edict required. Fearing that once the veterans had left the Dutch would not obey him, he also begged Philip to let him return to Spain. According to an indiscreet letter to Margaret, 'I told him that unless I received permission, there is nothing I would not do, including just leaving everything and going there, even if it is to be punished' and that 'my patience will last only until August or September'.[38]

The Perpetual Edict contained one surprising clause: Don John agreed that the Spanish veterans would leave by land, not by sea, thus depriving him of the vital instrument for conquering England. This critical concession reflected the arrival at his small court of a group of Anglo-Irish exiles, including the ubiquitous Thomas Stukeley. Together they discussed alternative strategies for deposing Elizabeth Tudor in favour of Don John, and Stukeley convinced him that even if the Spanish troops left by land, he could conquer England with the

5,000 soldiers raised in Italy, for whom the pope would provide wages and a fleet to bring them to the Channel, where Don John would join them. As soon as the Perpetual Edict had been signed Stukeley left for Rome, taking with him letters of commitment signed by Don John, and copies of Don John's letters to both Philip and Pérez begging them to provide support for Stukeley's venture. Gregory XIII confirmed in writing that 'he greatly desired that Your Highness should lead the Enterprise' and begged him 'to begin to think about' a suitable strategy 'so that His Holiness can also prepare everything that he is obliged to do in full confidence of success'. He also ordered Nuncio Ormanetto to obtain Philip's consent for this plan and sent a special envoy to the Netherlands to handle the distribution of papal funds for the Enterprise.[39]

Just like the ambitious and deceptive plans of Roberto Ridolfi a few years before (chapter 11), this project rested on flawed foundations. Stukeley lacked the resources to recruit and maintain 5,000 soldiers, still less a fleet to carry them from Italy to Ireland or England. And if the papal force did reach its destination, even Ormanetto recognized that 'success depends principally on an uprising by the Catholics of England whenever they see our fleet', but no one had arranged for such an uprising.[40] Finally, to imagine that Don John could secretly leave the Netherlands at a moment's notice to join Stukeley's adventurers when they arrived from Italy was pure fantasy.

Nevertheless, when Ormanetto mentioned the pope's invasion plan to Philip during an audience in April 1577, 'I found him constant and firm in his commitment to the Enterprise because he finds himself in a position to undertake it with a reasonable chance of success'.[41] Ormanetto did not yet know that one of Philip's secret agents in Istanbul had concluded a one-year ceasefire in the Mediterranean war with the Ottoman sultan; nor yet that, in the Netherlands, Escobedo had raised enough money to persuade the Spanish veterans to return to Italy. This permitted Don John to enter Brussels where, on 5 May 1577, he took the oath as governor-general, reiterating his promise to fulfil all the conditions of the Perpetual Edict. In return, the States of every province except Holland and Zeeland recognized Philip as their sovereign once more. Despite all the delays and missteps, it seemed as if Don John had successfully concluded the first part of his mission.

In his anxiety to become the next king of England, however, Don John (like Pérez and Escobedo) had overlooked a capital fact: just like him, the States-General had signed the Perpetual Edict without full consultation. Although William of Orange and his followers in Holland and Zeeland had ratified the Pacification of Ghent, they were not represented in the States-General's negotiations with Don John. They had therefore been unable to insist that the settlement guarantee the religious and political freedom for which they had fought – and so they rejected the Perpetual Edict. Philip identified this fatal

flaw as soon as he read the text. For a moment it slipped his mind – 'I was thinking of something else to write to you about the Netherlands, and now I can't remember it,' he apologized to Pérez – but 'now I remember what I forgot: that, if I understand this correctly, we should not say "the ratification of the agreement with the prince of Orange", but only "between my brother and the States-General"'.[42] In an attempt to persuade Orange to accept the Perpetual Edict, Don John sent negotiators to the town of Geertruidenberg to discuss with the prince and his associates their conditions for signing the Perpetual Edict and demobilizing their armed forces. The Netherlands would then be 'entirely pacified and peaceful, so that there is no chance of any trouble there, however slight', just as the king wanted, but Orange informed Don John's representatives, 'To tell you the truth, we can see that you wish to extirpate us and we do not wish to be extirpated.'[43] He declared that he would settle for nothing less than full religious freedom, guaranteed by foreign rulers.

The prince's intransigence reflected a strange circumstance: his agents had intercepted and deciphered all the letters sent by Don John and Escobedo to Philip and Pérez, and then shared them with Queen Elizabeth. They therefore knew Don John's true aims, as expressed in his decoded letters. 'If I deal and have dealt with the affairs of England,' he explained to his brother in May 1577, 'the main reason is because I can see that nothing is more important to the service of Your Majesty than to reduce that kingdom to the obedience of the pope and entrust it to a person who will serve you – like me.'[44] This and other letters revealed that the new governor-general was prepared to accept any terms for a settlement in the Netherlands, however outrageous, in order to clear the way for the Enterprise. His only alternative would be to resume the war – something that Orange now knew Philip would never condone. Therefore, supported by Queen Elizabeth, he made extreme demands, confident that he would get them – but in this he made a grave error: he reckoned without his rival's penchant for unilateral action.

After the failure of the talks at Geertruidenberg, Don John resolved to declare war on Orange and his allies, calculating that this would not only force Philip to recall him to Spain but also distract Elizabeth while Stukeley and his soldiers landed in England and liberated Mary Stuart. Don John therefore left Brussels and persuaded the papal agent to use the money he had brought from Rome for the Enterprise to raise German troops instead. He also summoned the recently departed Spanish regiments to return; sent letters to the pope and to the king's ministers in Italy explaining his new plan and asking for their support; and dispatched Escobedo to court, with orders to secure either the return of foreign troops or permission for him to return to Spain so that he could join Stukeley's expedition. Escobedo arrived in his native land for the last time on 21 July 1577. Three days later, without awaiting his

brother's approval, Don John unilaterally declared war on Orange and the States-General.

Peace or war?

Philip's initial response to this staggering act of disobedience was to send express messengers to his ministers in Italy forbidding them to comply with Don John's orders: 'For the present do not do this, even if my brother has ordered it, because that is what my service requires. I do not wish the Netherlanders to see Spanish troops and bankers arriving, because of the fears and suspicions this might cause.' Philip also dictated a long and bitter rebuke to his brother. Don John must not forget that the king wanted 'those provinces to be won over by peaceful means' and 'to avoid a breach and open war with them. We must not station foreign troops in the Netherlands again because of the unequivocal evidence from the past that this does not work.' Therefore, the king thundered, whatever the situation in the Netherlands, 'I will decide what is best in light of the affairs of my other kingdoms, and the resources and funds at my disposal'.[45]

The king wrote this clear admonishment on 28 August 1577, but in the course of the following week he made one of the most remarkable and fateful U-turns of his long reign. The change began three days later, when Philip signed a series of letters ordering his ministers in Italy to place the Spanish veterans on standby, ready to return to the Netherlands as soon as they received further orders from him. He also ordered his ministers to debate the current situation in the Netherlands – but this time, instead of consulting just 'the two', he sought the opinion of the full council of State. Quiroga made a final bid to secure approval for the Enterprise of England – 'I hold it certain that the root of all these evils is the queen of England; and that if she had to concentrate on keeping her own house in order, she could not make trouble elsewhere' – but the rest of the council recommended an immediate resumption of hostilities in the Netherlands.[46]

The king realized that he would not be able to mount a full-scale campaign against the Dutch if he also had to fight in the Mediterranean, and so he sent a secret agent back to Istanbul with orders to prolong the truce. Confident that the sultan would agree, on 11 September Philip signed orders for the Spanish veterans in Italy to return – but he did so with a caveat. 'Make sure that everyone understands', he commanded his brother, 'that this decision is not intended to change anything agreed and settled' in the Pacification of Ghent, 'but rather that your intention is to respect and fulfil all the promises you have made.'[47]

Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, the States-General defied Don John and invited their colleagues from Holland and Zeeland to join them in Brussels.

The prince of Orange entered the capital from which he had fled a decade before, where (Don John reported angrily and perhaps enviously) 'he was welcomed as if he were the messiah, and at his suggestion they have sent envoys to me with new demands that are totally unreasonable.' Don John interpreted this to mean 'that they want neither peace, nor God nor king', but for the time being he followed his brother's orders and conceded each of the new demands. On 21 September he retreated to Luxemburg, the only province that remained loyal to the king. That same month, in France, Catholic and Protestant leaders signed the peace of Bergerac, which ended their civil war and opened the way for an armed invasion of the Netherlands by the French Protestants. While 'in this labyrinth', Don John learned of Philip's decision to send back the Spanish troops and resume the war. The news, he said, 'has resurrected me from the dead' and he lost no time in raising troops wherever he could find them. He even asked the leader of the French Catholics, the duke of Guise, to release any Spanish volunteers who had served him during the civil war, and also to let him recruit a regiment of French infantry.[48]

According to Pérez's later recollection, news of 'the envoys sent by Don John to the duke of Guise, and the secret talks in his private chamber' about raising a French regiment to serve in the Netherlands, only reached the king indirectly – making him 'very suspicious' because neither Don John nor Escobedo 'mentioned it or anything else about it'.[49] With troops under his command again, Don John became even more unreasonable, demanding that his brother provide one million ducats in cash, with regular instalments to follow, adding rather rudely 'remember, Your Majesty: I want the same funding that you provided to the duke of Alba and those who succeeded him, especially considering that the need is much greater now.' He also urged Escobedo, still at court, to maintain the pressure on his brother. Meanwhile his ally Quiroga informed the king that discontented vassals in Sicily 'have dared to say that the Dutch have shown them the way' to secure concessions from their sovereign, and Quiroga insisted that the Enterprise of England was more necessary than ever 'for the good of Christendom and so that the wicked will be punished as an example to the world'. Once again the king rejected the idea, because 'it now involves even greater difficulties, and so we need to examine it very closely. So you must give this much thought. I am doing (and will do) the same.'[50]

Escobedo and Quiroga fared better with their other mission from Don John. The arrival of a fleet bearing unprecedented quantities of silver from America enabled the king to sign a General Settlement in December 1577 with the bankers affected by the Default Decree. Philip acknowledged that he owed almost 15 million ducats on the loans contracted between 1560 and 1575; and he sold church lands (with the pope's permission) and assigned bonds equivalent to two-thirds of this total. The bankers, for their part, accepted this haircut

and agreed to provide loans worth five million ducats to Don John and Spain's other commanders abroad in regular instalments. The king still insisted that his policy towards the Dutch had not changed. As he explained in a letter dated 24 January 1578: 'My intention is not to punish or ruin [the Netherlands], but rather to make them obey God and me. When they fulfil these two conditions, as I have promised, hostilities will cease and matters will return to the same state as under the late emperor, with forgiveness for all past deeds.'[51] But one week later, Don John and his improvised army routed the Dutch and advanced on Brussels, forcing Orange and his allies to flee. The victor once again dreamed of making an advantageous peace in the Netherlands as a prelude to invading England, and he demanded that Philip send Escobedo back with instructions authorizing the necessary steps and enough money to achieve his ambitious goals. Instead, Philip authorized Antonio Pérez to murder Escobedo.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Murder most foul?

Madrid, calle de la Almudena, 31 March 1578

It was the Monday of Holy Week. At 9 p.m. on 31 March 1578, Juan de Escobedo, formerly Philip II's secretary of the treasury and now the personal emissary of Don John of Austria, rode 'on horseback and deep in thought' along what is today calle de la Almudena, not far from the Alcázar, accompanied by two servants and a page carrying torches. He had been in the house of Doña Ana de Mendoza, princess of Éboli and widow of Ruy Gómez de Silva, 'a long time, until nightfall', and, as he approached his lodgings, six assailants suddenly attacked him. One of them gave 'a single sword thrust that went through his body from one side to the other' with 'a light sword, made in Castile'. Escobedo fell from his horse and bled to death before he had time to confess. Onlookers tried to apprehend the attackers, but although two of them lost their cloaks in the scuffle, they all escaped unrecognized into the darkness.[1]

Philip was at the Escorial to celebrate Easter when he received a note from Mateo Vázquez early the following morning with news of the assassination. He replied: 'It was very good that you informed me at once about Escobedo. I received it while still in bed, and very soon afterwards Diego de Córdoba arrived with the news, which I found strange.' The news was indeed 'strange'. Although Madrid had seen much street violence since it became Philip's capital, as a foreign ambassador observed: 'such assassinations are not normal'. Indeed, as another ambassador noted, Escobedo knew 'all the instructions and secrets' of both the king and his brother; and yet a well-organized gang had ambushed and murdered him in a crowded street not far from the royal palace. It was more than 'strange'.[2]

Escobedo had recently been the target of at least three assassination attempts, using poison, for which a Morisco slave in his household had been tried and executed. Her fate made it all the more astonishing that no one was immediately charged, let alone punished, for having run him through in the street. Two

weeks later, Orazio Maleguzzi, the ambassador of the duke of Ferrara, noted that two weeks of 'very strict inquiries' had 'failed to uncover the least clue concerning the authors of the crime', despite the fact that 'it would be almost impossible for a criminal to hide, especially when so many were involved'.[3]

Maleguzzi was right: it was impossible – and, indeed, by the time he wrote all six assassins had escaped from Madrid and reached Aragon (where they were safe from Castilian magistrates) thanks to the assistance of several prominent people. The princess of Éboli, in whose house Escobedo spent his last hours on earth, appointed one of them as her accountant with a generous salary; Antonio Pérez provided two others with 100 gold crowns each; and the rest each received 'a warrant and a letter signed by His Majesty granting him a bonus of twenty crowns a month and the rank of lieutenant' in one of the Spanish regiments stationed in Italy. Although the recipients wondered whether the warrants were genuine, none experienced any problem in claiming their reward when they got to Italy – for the simple reason that Pérez had arranged, and Philip had approved, both their flight and Escobedo's murder.

Accessory to murder

The king admitted his involvement in 1589, when he ordered Pérez to be tried for his part in the murder of Escobedo. He instructed his judges to find out 'the reasons that led' his former secretary 'to act and give orders in the matter, and the reasons why His Majesty would have consented'; and when they reported that Pérez would not answer, Philip sent a holograph message that 'commanded him to declare the reasons that existed for His Majesty to give his consent [*su consentimiento*] to the death of Secretary Escobedo'. He added, 'for my own satisfaction, and for the sake of my conscience, I would like to know whether or not those reasons sufficed'.[4]

Exactly what were those 'reasons', and why did the king decide in 1589, but not before, that he 'would like to know whether or not those reasons sufficed'? Unfortunately for historians, none of the principals explained at the time why they believed that Escobedo must die. Two of the assassins made sworn depositions, but they did so several years later while they were on trial for the murder, and their accounts contain important contradictions. Pérez himself refused to talk until 1590, when, after eight turns of the rack, he told his judges that if they 'released him and give him some clothes' then 'he would tell them whatever they wanted'. He then stated not only that Escobedo and Don John had conducted clandestine negotiations with the pope and the duke of Guise, and had plotted to conquer England – assertions that can be verified – but also that Escobedo had boasted that after 'they had become rulers of England' he and his

master 'would come and take over Spain, exiling His Majesty'. Pérez also produced a letter in which Escobedo insisted that Don John should leave the Netherlands and stage a coup in Spain:

> Having observed the wisdom, prudence and good sense with which His Highness had behaved in everything, it seemed that he was a vassal appropriate for a position [at the king's side]: someone whom God in His mercy has provided as a staff for [Philip] to use in his old age, just as the Scriptures said. Although Don John could be of great service in the Netherlands or elsewhere, nowhere would be as appropriate as by His Majesty's side so that he could govern everything.[5]

Pérez claimed that he had shared these indiscretions with one of Philip's councillors, the marquis of Los Vélez, who 'having heard all this and having seen some relevant papers, declared that [Escobedo] was a dangerous man and that it would be wise to separate him from Don John'. According to Pérez, Los Vélez also stated 'that if Escobedo returned to the Netherlands, the whole world would shake; and that if he was arrested (as His Majesty wanted to do) Don John would take offence; and so the best thing would be to do something different, to poison him or something like that [*darle un bocado o cosa tal*]'. These, Pérez asserted, 'were the principal reasons presented to His Majesty' to justify the judicial killing of Escobedo; and they evidently persuaded Philip to give his consent.[6]

Only one contemporary document confirms Pérez's assertion that Don John planned to return to Madrid and stage a coup: a previously unknown holograph note written by the duke of Alba to an ally at court in September 1577, when the council of State debated Don John's request that his nephew, Alexander Farnese prince of Parma, should join him in the Netherlands.

> Don John wants [the prince] there so that when a vacancy opens up – and please God let it not be sooner – he can leave the prince there in his place and come here. This is the advice people here have given him: that he should come without awaiting permission from His Majesty and that here is where he should be, governing the affairs of His Majesty. You would do me a great favour if you would tell His Majesty what I think about this. His Majesty will do whatever he wants, but he should know that I am telling the truth. I cannot do more – although if I could, there is a lot more to say about this matter.[7]

Alba had clearly heard a rumour that 'some people' at court (whether Pérez or someone else) wanted Don John to return and 'govern the affairs of His Majesty', just as Pérez would later assert, and he sought to inform the king.

Although we lack similar contemporary confirmation, two more of Pérez's later assertions also seem plausible: the concurrence of Los Vélez, given that he was one of only two other ministers whom Philip consulted about how to handle his brother, and the marquis's insistence that Escobedo should be secretly poisoned instead of openly arrested (which would reveal to Don John that the king had discovered the planned coup). Moreover, there is abundant evidence that Philip was not opposed to authorizing the assassination of those whom he believed had betrayed him. He promised a handsome reward to anyone who would murder Prince William of Orange (duly paid to the family of the assassin, Balthasar Gérard) and later Antonio Pérez himself; and he had several lesser ministers secretly executed when convinced of their guilt.[8]

Philip might well have been persuaded to believe the worst about his brother. As an ambassador had put it a few years before, 'The king suffers from the same malady as his father: that is, suspicion' (chapter 4), and Don John's behaviour offered ample grounds for suspicion: he had made unauthorized journeys to Spain; he had undertaken secret negotiations with the pope and with Guise; and he had unilaterally both signed and then reneged on a peace settlement with the Dutch. All this might have led Philip to believe that Don John and Escobedo intended to 'come and take over Spain, exiling His Majesty'. Pérez, who had worked closely with Philip throughout his adult life, would certainly have known how best to exploit his master's dark side in order to get approval to murder Escobedo – and probably no one would ever have known of their role had one of the attempts to kill him by poison succeeded. Only the public nature of the execution and the mystifying escape of the perpetrators revealed the existence of a plot.

The testimony of two of the assassins – Diego Martínez and Antonio Enríquez, respectively majordomo and former page of Pérez – provided a time frame for Escobedo's last weeks. Martínez stated that 'around Christmas 1577, about three months before the murder' Pérez asked him for the first time: 'Is there some way to kill' Escobedo? On this occasion, Martínez 'told him that he did not know, and that is how matters rested for some days'; but before long Pérez raised the matter again, and the two 'spent several days discussing how it could be done; and we decided to give him a drink' containing poison the next time Escobedo dined with Pérez. Martínez did so, but 'it did not work' and so 'later we decided to give him something else, which we did: putting some powder into a stew while it was cooking' ready for Escobedo to eat when he dined with Pérez. 'This did not work either', although this time Escobedo was sick and took to his bed. Martínez therefore told his master 'that it would be better to stop, and that he did not understand why he was doing this.'[9]

Up to this point, Pérez had apparently withheld mention of the king's approval of the murder, but to persuade Martínez to make a third attempt he

now revealed that 'the murder was necessary, because it was important for His Majesty's service and so we had to find someone who would do the job'. At this Martínez replied incredulously:

> 'What poor devils would dare to do it, because if they were caught and arrested they would be executed?' And Antonio Pérez responded: 'No they would not: even if the perpetrators were unfortunate enough to be caught, they would not be harmed because His Majesty would order them to be spared. Take that from me.'

This persuaded Martínez to make one more attempt to administer poison, this time with the help of a boy who worked in his kitchen who went to Escobedo's house and placed 'a thimbleful of certain powders that Diego Martínez had given him' in a cooking pot. Escobedo (still recovering from the last attempt to kill him) realized what had happened and accused a Morisco slave working in his kitchen of attempted murder. She confessed under torture and was publicly executed. For the third time, Escobedo survived.[10]

Pérez now took the fateful decision 'to proceed by another path, which was to find a way of killing him [Escobedo] one night in a street, using a pistol or a sword or something,' and in January 1578 he asked both Martínez and Enríquez if they knew anyone 'who would be willing to stab a man to death'. Enríquez went to Barcelona and recruited his half-brother while Martínez found a swordsman named Insausti prepared to do the deed. All this took 'something like a month, or a month and a half', and so it was not until Holy Week that Martínez and his co-conspirators 'met together in a field outside Madrid to finalize how to carry out the murder'. They decided to acquire 'a light sword, made in Castile': the weapon that on Easter Monday Insausti used to deadly effect in calle de la Almudena.[11]

If 'around Christmas 1577' Philip gave his consent to eliminating Escobedo by poison, did he also approve the change to another method of assassination a few weeks later? The change was critical because, although it proved surprisingly easy to cover up all three attempts to poison Escobedo, hiring six men to stab him in one of the most populous neighbourhoods of the capital on a public holiday was a high-risk strategy: unlike poison, there was no chance of either concealment or ambiguity; and even if they were successful, at least one assassin might later be captured and under torture would surely reveal that Pérez had recruited him and his associates with the king's consent.

Pérez stated during his trial that 'the king was so concerned' about how the murder of his secretary in public 'would alienate and outrage Don John' that he and Pérez agreed that 'if the murderers of Escobedo should be captured, Pérez would take responsibility and flee post-haste to Aragon as a criminal'.[12]

Although this statement, written down many years after the event, is the only direct testimony that the king explicitly approved the change of plan, two other pieces of circumstantial evidence offer support. First, just before the murder, Philip apparently signed warrants promoting three of the hired assassins to the rank of lieutenant and awarding them a salary bonus: six documents in all, each one duly copied into the government's official registers. Second, in 1589 Pérez wrote a series of anxious letters to the king about the success of Escobedo's sons in locating not only three of their father's assassins but also the pharmacist who had prepared the doses of poison previously used unsuccessfully. Pérez suggested that Philip should order his confessor, Fray Diego de Chaves, 'to seek a remedy for what may transpire' because, since these four men knew 'everything about this business, he will know best what should be done to avoid greater difficulties for both those under arrest and for us'. The juxtaposition of the name of the pharmacist involved in the plan to poison Escobedo, which the king had definitely approved, and of three of those involved in the actual assassination, argues that the king had approved that plan too.[13]

The balance of evidence therefore suggests the complicity of Philip in every aspect of Escobedo's murder: he had allowed Pérez to convince him that Don John and his secretary were traitors; that murdering Escobedo by any means necessary offered the only way to thwart their plans (implausible though those plans may now seem); and, finally, that the assassination should be carried out in public in his capital.

One crime: four motives

Since no reliable evidence exists that Escobedo was part of a plot to overthrow the king, why did Pérez want to murder him? What ulterior motives might he have chosen not to share with the king, either then or later?

Those who disliked Pérez – and they were many – later suggested that he wanted Escobedo dead so that he could not reveal to Philip some compromising information. Specifically, because

- Escobedo could prove that Pérez accepted bribes; or
- Pérez had promised a 'significant reward' to Escobedo, and when the king did not confer it, Escobedo blamed Pérez; or
- Escobedo had evidence of an affair between Pérez and the princess of Éboli; or
- Escobedo knew that Pérez had deceived the king concerning Don John's plans.

Each of these charges had some plausibility, at least on the surface.

Pérez was undoubtedly guilty of the first charge: he had indeed accepted bribes. The secretary developed expensive tastes and he flaunted them, both at his city house in the Plaza del Cordón and after 1573 at La Casilla, an Italianate villa so lavish that it became a tourist attraction. Don Rodrigo de Castro, archbishop of Seville, 'wondered greatly how Antonio Pérez found the money to do this, since his income was not much more than he received as his official salary'.[14] The implication of Don Rodrigo's statement was clear – Pérez financed the lavish lifestyle from bribes – and concrete examples abound. Thus one day in 1579 Luigi Dovara, the Tuscan ambassador, 'went to the house of Antonio Pérez' and delivered a letter from the Grand Duke. The secretary told him that 'since there were still things to discuss, he wanted to meet me alone very early the next morning at his country house, where we would talk'. When Dovara arrived at La Casilla,

> I found [Pérez] still dressing, but he bade me enter and ordered everyone else to leave. I told him that Your Grace was very unhappy that he had not yet contributed anything to the wonders of his country house, and that I had therefore brought him these gifts, which I then presented, having placed the two thousand crowns that you authorized in two pouches concealed in my tights.

It is unlikely that an ambassador travelling through the streets of Madrid with two pouches each containing 1,000 gold coins stuffed into his tights would have gone unnoticed, even in the early morning; and such blatant shakedowns – and evidence of many more soon came to light – make it improbable that Pérez needed to kill Escobedo simply to keep his bribes secret from the king, for the simple reason that so many other people also knew about them.[15]

The second possible motive for murdering Escobedo arose from the promise made (with the king's permission) in Pérez's letters of 8 April 1576 that Escobedo would receive a 'significant reward' if he persuaded Don John to go to the Netherlands (chapter 13). Don John evidently found out about this promise, because he reminded his brother of it several times. For example, 'Escobedo has served you for so many years and in so many ways' that 'truly, Sire, he deserves more than a knighthood from Your Majesty in compensation, and since this reward would also please me I ask it of you again'. In April 1577 Pérez again raised the matter in two separate notes, but Philip replied: 'I prefer to reward those who do not importune me than those who do' and refused to confer any reward 'for the time being'. Pérez let the matter drop, but soon after his friend returned to court in July 1577 he reported to his master: 'Escobedo is very insistent in the matter of his knighthood: Your Majesty can see the threats he makes. To be frank, I think it would be better to give it to him so that

he does not worry Your Majesty to death.' In October 1577, Don John mobilized Cardinal Quiroga, who likewise begged Philip to grant Escobedo a knighthood – but his efforts also failed: 'I will see what should be done at the right time,' the king stated coldly. This refusal apparently settled the matter. Escobedo no doubt felt deceived when he did not receive the 'significant reward' he had been promised; but he knew, as everyone else knew, that only the king could confer knighthoods. He would therefore have blamed Philip, not Pérez; and so, 'the reasons that existed for His Majesty to give his consent to the death of Secretary Escobedo' almost certainly did not include 'the matter of his knighthood'.[16]

As for a love affair between Pérez and the princess of Éboli, Escobedo certainly harboured some suspicions. When he visited the Madrid residence of Doña Ana:

> Her chambermaid said that she could not speak with him, and when Escobedo asked her who was with the princess, they told him that it was Secretary Antonio Pérez. On one occasion the said Escobedo became angry and said: 'What business could the princess have to discuss with Antonio Pérez that would prevent me from entering?'

Given the strict rules of decorum expected of widows in Castile, and especially the widows of grandees, it was a reasonable question. Furthermore, Escobedo was Ana's relative and he had served Ana for twenty years, carrying out delicate missions and receiving long and affectionate letters from her; and yet when he warned her 'that some people took a dim view of the entries and exits of Antonio Pérez' she replied 'that he had a dirty mind, and that squires should not meddle in such things'. Shortly after this exchange, Escobedo was murdered as he rode home from visiting the princess.[17]

Nevertheless, if Pérez arranged the assassination of Escobedo to prevent the discovery of an affair with the princess, one might have expected him to reduce the frequency and duration of their time alone together – but instead it increased. An outraged cousin of Ruy Gómez declared that the secretary 'visited the princess often and on some occasions was with her for several hours'. He also claimed to have seen 'much worse things that he would rather not declare: suffice it to say that relations between the two were not pure'. As in the case of the bribes, there was little advantage to Pérez in arranging the death of Escobedo to avoid suspicion of some liaison with the princess, because so many other people believed 'that relations between the two were not pure'.[18]

The fourth possible reason why Pérez may have wanted Escobedo dead is far more plausible: that the two had conspired, perhaps with the complicity of Don John, to deceive the king. The secretary admitted as much during his

interrogation, explaining to his judges that 'letters and information normally passed between him and Escobedo as if His Majesty did not know what they exchanged, but he [Pérez] revealed and showed the king everything'. He also claimed that Philip 'ordered him to write to Escobedo with enough openness to reassure him and thus to discover his movements, and to make it appear that he was doing this without the knowledge of His Majesty; and among his papers may be found some memoranda from His Majesty in his own hand that approved this practice.'[19]

Some of these 'memoranda from His Majesty in his own hand' have survived. Thus in March 1576 Pérez informed Escobedo that he had 'resolved not to show His Majesty' two letters in which Don John 'stressed the appalling state of affairs over there [in Naples] and blamed it on the marquis of Mondéjar', the viceroy, 'something unworthy of the person who wrote it and of the person to whom he wrote'. Pérez sent the two letters back, apparently unread by the king – but in fact Philip had not only read both of them but also explicitly approved of the deception as a way of convincing both Escobedo and Don John that they could safely share all their secrets with Pérez.[20] But this proves only that Pérez *sometimes* 'revealed and showed the king everything' that reached his desk concerning Don John, not that he *always* did so. Other documents tell a different story. Thus some months after Escobedo's death, Pérez jovially informed the Spanish ambassador in Paris, Juan de Vargas Mexía, who worked closely with Don John, that his recent letters 'gave great satisfaction to our master. He saw all of them – I mean, the ones he should see'. In another letter, Pérez instructed Vargas: 'It is very important to me that you should send the enclosed letter to Don John right away, saying that you received it with my letter of 12 May . . . Even if you have to send an express messenger, make sure that it arrives before the rest of the letters for His Highness brought by this courier.'[21] These original letters, preserved only because Vargas Mexía died in Paris and deposited his papers in a local convent, demonstrate that Pérez did not show 'our master' all incoming mail just as he did not always tell Don John the truth. In the words of his friend Quiroga, it seems that 'Pérez replaced correct words in correspondence with false ones'.[22]

Most incriminating of all, in his letter to Escobedo on 16 April 1576, just one week after the package of letters crafted by the king to convince his brother that he must leave Naples immediately for Flanders, Pérez ordered that Don John should not proceed beyond Lombardy but wait there for further orders (chapter 13). Escobedo, then, had at least one secret that he could use to blackmail Pérez and perhaps around Christmas 1577, after five months of fruitless waiting in Madrid, he either threatened Pérez that unless the king approved Don John's participation in the Enterprise of England, he would leak the subversive letter of 16 April 1576 (and perhaps others); or else Pérez, knowing

that the king would never give his approval, feared that such a threat might soon materialize. Given that either alternative would end his career, if not also his life, Pérez had considerable incentives to fabricate compromising letters from both Don John and Escobedo to persuade the king to give his consent to extrajudicial murder.

Escobedo's posthumous revenge

At first it seemed as though both Pérez and Philip would get away with murder: the 'light sword, made in Castile' performed perfectly in calle de la Almudena, and the six assassins all escaped to Aragon. Although Don John demanded revenge on 1 October 1578 he died of typhus, reducing the pressure to investigate who had murdered Escobedo. Nevertheless, the issue refused to go away, largely because of the extraordinary behaviour of Pérez himself. Admittedly, he took some elementary precautions when he heard that Don John might be mortally ill, instructing Escobedo's successor as secretary to keep 'my letters for Señor Don John', until 'I tell you otherwise, under lock and key, without anyone else seeing them . . . And do the same with my letters to Escobedo.'[23] His behaviour in Spain showed no such prudence and, ironically, in the end this – rather than the bribes, the secret correspondence or arranging an assassination – brought him down. It also brought down the princess of Éboli.

Given her kinship and long association with Escobedo, it seems strange that Ana did not share in the universal outrage at his murder or urge the king to find the murderers. Instead, she engaged in a complex series of transactions with Pérez (sending him many expensive presents, making joint financial investments so complex that even the trial judges could not disentangle them); she named (on Pérez's recommendation) one of Escobedo's assassins as her accountant with a generous salary and fringe benefits, soon increased; and she even announced to her children 'that they should treat Antonio Pérez as their brother, since he was also the son of Ruy Gómez', conceived before the latter's marriage.[24] She also became involved in palace politics. In May 1578, two months after Escobedo's death, Mateo Vázquez complained to the king about 'the falsehoods and factions' of the court, 'and although I shrink from them to avoid giving them anything to talk about, they will not leave me alone. I have already drawn to Your Majesty's attention the ambition and conduct of the secretary who is always talking to the marquis' (which could only mean Pérez, the close associate of Los Vélez). The king did his best to soothe Vázquez's feelings.

> Since you are always straightforward with me, as I know you are, you should take absolutely no notice of this. The best thing to do for the affairs of God and the world is to shut your ears, and even your eyes, so that you do not

> notice . . . Believe me: this is the simplest, least stressful and most sure path for everything, serving God and me. Since that is what you do already, you have nothing to fear.[25]

Philip's unusually repetitive rescript no doubt reflected his own uncertainty. After all, 'shut your ears, and even your eyes' was precisely what he was doing in the Escobedo case. Vázquez did not intend to let this continue. Instead, he urged Pedro de Escobedo, son of the murdered secretary, to demand justice from the president of the council of Castile.

A few days later, the princess of Éboli counter-attacked, declaring that 'she would regard anyone as her enemy if, like Mateo Vázquez, they attempted to accuse' Pérez of 'the death of Escobedo'.[26] Vázquez raised the matter in a missive to the king in November 1578, which provoked the following furious reply:

> Concerning what you wrote in the paper that arrived here – which I have burned – I have already told you before what I think, and I do the same again now. When the person you name in the paper [Pérez] talks to me about these matters, I will not listen if he goes beyond what concerns him . . . You can speak to me, without him [Pérez] or anyone else knowing, so that I can see if these things have foundation or not. Say nothing about all this.[27]

Vázquez now changed his strategy. Instead of acting like a minister complaining about a colleague, the following month he acted as a priest and composed a paper 'For Your Majesty alone' that bluntly set out the reasons why 'God is angry with us' and what would happen if the king failed to provide a remedy:

1. 'Your Majesty should endeavour to revisit past events, and when you do so pay special attention to see whether there were some that, whether for lack of good advice or other reasons, might lead Your Majesty to fear that they cry out to Our Lord for vengeance or satisfaction.'
2. 'If Your Majesty, with his great piety, prudence and experience, should find something in the manner of transacting public affairs (or in the persons who transact them) that deserves attention in order to enable you to attend to everything better, then Your Majesty should attend to it.'
3. 'May God guide Your Majesty in choosing good ministers, which is so important, because we know that when He wants to punish princes, He begins by blinding them in this.'[28]

Playing on the king's guilty conscience proved a shrewd strategy: 1578 had been a thoroughly depressing year for Philip. His heir Fernando, his brother

Don John and his nephews Sebastian and Wenceslas had all died; and the renewed war in the Netherlands, though very expensive, had stalled. Vázquez expected that the king's Providential philosophy would link these various misfortunes to his failure to provide justice in the Escobedo case, but two weeks later a spectacular event distracted everyone and paralysed the king's government. On 10 January 1579 Philip banished the duke of Alba from court. The following day he and his wife left their quarters in the Alcázar, never to return.

The disgrace of the House of Toledo

Some observers had long expected this. In 1574, Philip set up a junta to advise him 'how you think I need to act' concerning 'the excesses in justice, finance and war' committed in the Netherlands under Alba and his son and heir Don Fadrique. The junta recommended a public punishment, but in the end the king's nerve failed him: 'Although it would be a great relief to me to take this public step, I do not think I can do it,' he confessed.[29] The only action he took was to forbid Don Fadrique to enter Madrid, instead ordering him to proceed directly to his estates in La Mancha until further notice; however, the sentence was not ostensibly for misdeeds in the Netherlands but for something that had occurred at court eight years before.

In 1566 Don Fadrique, then a gentleman of the king's bedchamber, had formed an illicit liaison with Magdalena de Guzmán and promised to marry her. There could be no doubt of this because his beloved possessed several of his love letters, in which he gave his 'word and faith as a knight to marry you, if you wish it'.[30] Alba had other ideas: he persuaded the king to exile Magdalena to a convent, and to exile his son to the garrison of Oran until he could join him in Brussels. The duke also signed a contract obliging his heir to marry a cousin, María de Toledo, but Magdalena and her relatives objected that Fadrique had already given his pledge to her, and they appealed to the king. Philip accepted the justice of their cause, but in September 1578 Alba assured his incredulous but obedient son that 'His Majesty has given you permission to marry the said Doña María de Toledo, and so you may do so'. The following month, in the presence of many relatives, Don Fadrique married his cousin and consummated the union before returning to his place of exile.[31]

Although the Toledo clan tried to keep the matter secret, news soon arrived at court (possibly thanks to spies maintained by Antonio Pérez) and, on the king's orders, Mateo Vázquez confronted the duke and asked him outright whether or not the marriage had taken place. Alba, he reported, 'told me so many things that to relate them here would require a very long letter. He did not commit himself regarding the wedding; but I suspect that it has taken place.'[32] This disobedience at last gave Philip the perfect excuse to punish Alba

and his entourage for 'excesses in justice, finance and war' in the Netherlands and on 8 December he ordered guards to place Don Fadrique in close confinement. He also deprived him of his post as gentleman of the bedchamber and of some revenues he received from the treasury.

The disgrace of the House of Toledo offered Pérez a golden opportunity to settle scores. 'Since the duke of Alba now stands convicted, the world is wondering what will happen to this man,' he informed the king on 2 January 1579. Without pausing for breath he continued that Philip should order an exemplary punishment 'because kings are never more regal than when they dispense justice and punishment'. Pérez stressed that 'the duke has committed such a bold and defiant act' and, he asked malevolently, 'what else might he dare to do, if he remains unpunished for this one?' He even drew an invidious parallel with Álvaro de Luna, a royal Favourite disgraced and decapitated in 1453, claiming that 'in all the charges made against Luna, there was none that matched' Alba's crime. 'When men of the calibre and qualities of the duke commit acts of defiance and do the things that he has done,' Pérez continued, 'there will be no one who does not follow suit, and no one who will not dare to do whatever he wants – just as during the reigns of King Henry [IV] and King John [II]' – telling comparisons designed to remind Philip of the noble rebellions and plots that had rocked Castile to its foundations only a century before.[33] A week later, the king not only sentenced Alba to exile for the rest of his life but also transferred some of his income from the royal treasury to Doña Magdalena de Guzmán, as 'her dowry and as recompense for the injuries she has received, since we can no longer honour her claims' to be betrothed to Don Fadrique. He also exiled other members of the House of Toledo from the court.[34]

Six months later, when the king arrested her, the princess of Éboli speculated 'that it was her punishment for having rejoiced over the arrest of the duke of Alba'; but in fact she had brought about her own downfall by fomenting the enmity of the king's principal secretaries. At least in public, Vázquez declared himself anxious for a reconciliation with 'my lady the princess of Éboli' and Pérez, 'esteeming and praising him as I should, just as I have done and intend to do at all times and places'; but perhaps recognizing Vázquez's insincerity, they both rejected his olive branch.[35]

The king was at a loss concerning how to reconcile his ministers and restore the smooth running of his government ('the more I think of it, the more confused I feel'), and in March 1579 he resolved to use a religious holiday 'to examine the matter closely. I shall also use the time to confess, take communion and ask God to enlighten and guide me, so that after Easter I may take the decision most suitable to His service, the discharge of my conscience, and the good of public affairs.' He concluded: 'perhaps at the same time God will also influence them [Pérez and the princess] to abandon the doomed path that they have chosen'.[36]

He wished in vain. No sooner had Philip concluded his devotions than the warring factions took up arms again. Quiroga pressured his master to appoint Pérez to the vacant position of secretary of the council of Italy, while Vázquez continued to complain bitterly to the king that 'in public Antonio Pérez shows great hostility towards me, which scandalizes the court'. Once again, Philip promised action: 'I will consider the appropriate remedy and put it into effect, and I hope it will be appropriate', but the 'remedy' astonished the court (and no doubt Vázquez as well). Philip announced publicly that Pérez 'did not kill Escobedo', and 'promised to punish those who had falsely accused him'; while the president of the council of Castile warned Pedro de Escobedo that 'he should examine very carefully how he proceeded in this matter because, since he had not proved his accusation, he would be punished *ad penam talionis* ["an eye for an eye"]'. This, an ambassador noted, 'cooled things down considerably', since 'those who sought vengeance now realize that His Majesty values the services of [Pérez] as he deserves, and that the secretary will prevail over his rivals'.[37] He could not have been more wrong.

Faced by threats and ultimata from his two most powerful secretaries, and deprived by death and disgrace of most of his senior advisers, on 30 March 1579 (the eve of the first anniversary of Escobedo's murder) the king dictated a letter requesting Cardinal Granvelle to come and join him at court. Perhaps fearful that the cardinal would argue and drag his feet like Don John three years before, Philip added plaintively 'I desire and greatly need you to come as soon as possible'; and in case this did not suffice, he wrote a holograph postscript: 'The sooner you can come, the happier I shall be.' The Genoese ambassador immediately grasped the significance of this invitation. Noting that since only two councillors of state remained in Madrid, 'so that little business gets transacted', he predicted that once Granvelle arrived in Spain 'he will be omnipotent'.[38]

Until his saviour arrived, Philip kept away from Madrid and his quarrelsome ministers as much as possible. As usual he spent Easter at the Escorial, where the monks noted that 'He passed many hours in his private chapel, day and night, before the Sacrament'. They speculated that 'no doubt God secretly sent him inspiration on what he needed to do'.[39] Nevertheless, Philip was now cornered. At an audience in May, he blurted out to the papal nuncio that 'everyone had abandoned him, and left him all alone, and yet he still had to think of everything'. The following month, Vázquez increased the pressure again. 'I have a terrible migraine so that I can no longer prepare summaries of incoming documents for Your Majesty,' he wailed, and although he claimed to be doing his best 'to deal with matters that need attention while there is still time', he wondered whether the king had thought of anyone who could do his job after he died of stress.[40] When this ploy failed to elicit the desired response, Vázquez threw caution to the winds and demanded that the king immediately arrest those

responsible for the murder of Escobedo. 'Granted', he began disingenuously, 'that neither the princess nor Antonio Pérez are apparently guilty of the death', God still required the king to arrest 'the real killers'. The king replied by pleading for more time to 'examine more closely what path to take in dealing with the Escobedo business'. On 9 July he made one more effort to reconcile his secretaries, but only Vázquez agreed to 'enter into negotiations to bring this business to an end' – and then only in return for certain concessions: the king must punish Pérez for spreading baseless slanders; he must silence all others who had 'assisted and fomented this enmity', and 'particularly the princess'; and no one must receive advance warning of their punishment.[41]

Vázquez had probably seen an intemperate note sent to Philip by the princess, complaining about the insinuations of Vázquez and others, 'such as saying that Antonio Pérez killed Escobedo for my sake, and that he [Pérez] had such obligations to my family that when I asked him, he was obliged to do it'. She continued: 'His boldness and disrespect have reached such a pitch that as both a king and a gentleman Your Majesty is obliged to make an example of this Moorish dog who serves you.'[42] Philip dared not act until he knew that Granvelle was at hand, but on 25 July he returned to the Alcázar and demanded two concessions from Pérez: that he accept the post of ambassador to the republic of Venice and leave the court; and 'that the said Antonio Pérez and Matheo Vázquez reconcile and become friends'. Pérez rejected both demands, and the princess unwisely sent another 'message to His Majesty that if he did not dismiss Mateo Vázquez from his service, she would have him killed at the king's feet'.[43]

Vázquez evidently sensed which way the wind was blowing, because he now sent a bloodthirsty message of his own to the king that began: 'I simply don't know how that woman [the princess] can forget either the anger and justice of God, or that Your Majesty is here to carry them out'. More specifically, 'she should remember what happened to Jezebel, the queen of Israel who persecuted the Prophets and died torn in pieces and eaten by dogs'. This was strong language for a priest, but Vázquez had only just hit his stride. 'They say that Antonio Pérez is going around spreading false rumours: the Devil must be about to take him, since his deeds justify it. And since Your Majesty knows this, I beg you to defend and protect me.'[44]

This time, 'having confessed and taken communion' in the chapel of the Madrid Alcázar, the king prepared himself for decisive action. He replied to Vázquez on 26 July with unusual loquacity:

> I am only staying here to take care of this matter, as I am doing – but I am only confiding this to you. I hope to do the right thing. There are certainly some strange people in this world . . . Concerning that woman [the princess], what

> she says is less alarming than what she does not say . . . As for the rest, I am taking the appropriate steps; and as I said, I am dealing with it. As I told you, this is why I am staying [in Madrid]: otherwise I would already have left, or would leave tomorrow.

That night, according to a chronicler, 'between eight and nine o'clock' Madrid experienced 'an enormous hailstorm, the worst I ever remember seeing because most of the hailstones were larger than pigeon's eggs', but the king ignored the storm, imperviously reading and returning the dossiers received from his secretaries until late in the night. 'I'm sure I have lots more to send you, but I can't handle anything more now because it's midnight and I need to eat dinner' he informed Mateo Vázquez, before adding with an audible sigh of relief, 'I believe Granvelle will arrive soon, and I think we can then tie up all the loose ends.'[45] It was now 27 July 1579. The cardinal reached the outskirts of Madrid the following day.

Madrid, Plaza del Cordón, 28 July 1579

Philip now sprang the elaborate trap he had prepared. First, he wrote a note to Pérez's ally Antonio Mauriño de Pazos, who, as president of the council of Castile, held ultimate responsibility for all judicial matters but happened to be sick in bed. The king began disarmingly: 'Because of your illness and my workload, I have not written to you recently about the business of the two secretaries.' He then explained the 'many inquiries that have been made to see if there was substance to the accusations about Mateo Vázquez' made by Pérez and the princess; but, he continued, 'we found nothing'. Therefore 'I decided to clear up the matter, and the only way to do this was to secure the persons [of the two accusers]. I have therefore ordered that this be done tonight.' The king concluded 'it is proper that you know what is about to happen, which is why I am writing to you now, even though it is very late' – but, he added disingenuously, 'I have given orders that you should receive this message when you awake', and he did not allow the messenger to leave the Alcázar until the following morning.[46]

Philip nevertheless needed accomplices in order to spring his trap, and at some point on the evening of 28 July he instructed two trusted officials to be ready for a secret mission: Álvaro García de Toledo, one of the magistrates with jurisdiction over the court, must prepare twenty armed men and a spare horse, while Don Rodrigo Manuel, captain of the royal guards, must muster his men and procure a carriage. Philip then finished his paperwork, and, as usual, his valets distributed it among his secretaries. The note attached to the dossier for Pérez read: 'I am returning to you the papers concerning Italy, with instructions on what to do about them. I am retaining those about Portugal, because I have not

read them. I shall deal with your personal affairs before I leave – at least with the part that concerns me.' If Pérez pondered the meaning of that last cryptic phrase he did not ponder for long, because around midnight García de Toledo knocked at the door of his house in the Plaza del Cordón. Pérez had retired for the night, and when informed 'that His Majesty had ordered his arrest, he staggered and lacked the strength to put on his clothes. The magistrate almost had to force his servants to dress him.' Pérez mounted the spare horse, without his sword, and García de Toledo took him away under guard.[47] Shortly afterwards, a second drama unfolded. Don Rodrigo Manuel and his guards arrested the princess of Éboli and placed her, accompanied by just three of her ladies, in the waiting carriage and conveyed her to a cell in the fortress of Pinto. For the second time in six months, the king had summarily arrested and exiled a Spanish grandee.

Having accomplished what he had come to Madrid to do, accompanied by Mateo Vázquez Philip returned to the Escorial, where Granvelle awaited them. Back in the capital, the rest of his ministers, the diplomatic corps and the inhabitants of the city debated the significance of the amazing events of the previous night. In the words of one ambassador: 'These events have given us much to marvel at, seeing that in such a short time those who ruled the world now find themselves in misery.'[48] Sixteen months after his murder, Juan de Escobedo had thus obtained a measure of revenge, and Philip had managed to end the paralysis of his government while still concealing his involvement in the murder of his late brother's secretary – at least for the time being.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Years of triumph, 1578–1585

A king for Portugal

On 13 August 1578 Philip II complained petulantly to Antonio Pérez: 'I slept so badly last night that now, before lunch, I am falling asleep – as I think you will see in my comments and in the script of this note, because I'm sure I wrote some words while asleep.' What had upset the king's routine? He was at the Escorial when Pérez, in Madrid, forwarded the dramatic news that Moroccan forces had routed and killed King Sebastian of Portugal at the battle of Alcazarquivir. On hearing the news late on 12 August Philip 'immediately retired to his chapel' and then went to bed – but, as he told Pérez, he could not sleep.[1]

The disaster did not come as a total surprise. Philip had celebrated Christmas 1576 with his nephew at the monastery of Guadalupe and discussed Sebastian's plan to conquer Morocco, and he had promised to supply fifty galleys and up to 5,000 soldiers for the expedition. Although neither monarch managed to mobilize their resources in time for a campaign the following year, Philip apparently failed to inform his nephew that in the meantime he had sent a secret envoy, Giovanni Marliano, to Constantinople with full powers to prolong the armistice with the Turks (chapter 13). In February 1578, Marliano signed a ceasefire for the rest of the year that included not only the Spanish and Ottoman empires but also a host of nominated allies – including the rulers of Morocco – and informed Philip that if he sent suitable gifts, together with a formal embassy, the sultan might conclude a truce of up to twenty years.

When this spectacular news reached Madrid, the king claimed to see God's hand in Marliano's success. 'Given the need to attend to Netherlands affairs,' he wrote,

> it is really important to conclude this truce, so much so that without it I don't know how we can continue . . . I have therefore decided that we should

> proceed with the matter and try to conclude it on the best terms possible – and quickly so that we can immediately take advantage of it – and also to ensure that no [Turkish] fleet will sail against us next year [1579].

The king also made clear his preference for a truce lasting twenty years (the maximum period mentioned by Marliano) that would bind not only the two monarchs but also their successors and their allies.[2]

Philip also wrote a holograph letter to his nephew that, while praising his sacred and glorious plan to 'propagate the Christian faith in the lands of the Infidel', nevertheless 'begged him to think very carefully before he acted'. Above all, since Sebastian lacked an heir apparent, Philip urged him not to participate in person. Also, Philip instructed Don Juan de Silva, his ambassador in Lisbon, to inform Sebastian of the ceasefire with the sultan and to point out that an attack on Morocco would jeopardize the truce. Philip hoped that Silva could save his nephew 'from his current illusions and from the danger in which he seems determined to place his person, possessions and reputation'. He was wasting his time: the following month Sebastian left Lisbon with a fleet carrying almost all of Portugal's nobles and some 17,000 troops. Silva, who accompanied the expedition, complained to his master 'that we are inexperienced, disobedient, ill-led, and without a commander except for King Sebastian, who has no minister with the standing to contradict him'. He added, 'I am sorry that I cannot provide Your Majesty with any optimistic prediction that does not involve a miracle.' No miracle occurred. Instead, on 4 August 1578, at Alcazarquivir, in Silva's bitter words, 'as was only to be expected [*conforme a la razón*], we suffered a miserable defeat and the loss of the king'.[3]

Philip's immediate concern was a possible Muslim counter-attack. On 13 August, despite his sleepless night he sent Secretary of War Juan Delgado a list of 'some precautions' required 'to place ourselves in a state of defence at once' to 'protect the Andalusian coast as well as Portugal and our bases in Africa', noting proudly that 'I added a good number of them myself'.[4] But what did the defeat and death of Sebastian mean for the Netherlands? Antonio Pérez tried to calibrate 'events here with events there', concluding that 'even if there was an abundance of money', Spain could not now 'complete the conquest' of the Low Countries. Given the unstable situation in the Mediterranean, he recommended trying to negotiate a new settlement with the Dutch. Philip agreed: 'Without doubt, it would be best to reach an agreement, provided it safeguards the Catholic faith, but even that presents a hundred thousand difficulties because the rebels now enjoy such an advantage that they will not want to concede anything that we want.'[5]

Sebastian's death also created dynastic problems. His obvious successor was his great-uncle Cardinal Henry, aged 67; but, since neither Henry nor his brothers (all deceased) had any legitimate sons, his closest legitimate

male relative was Philip II. In his first consulta after hearing about Alcazarquivir, Pérez rejoiced over this propitious circumstance: 'although we cannot fail to feel regret, if the news is true it has good consequences,' he told the king, and shamelessly proceeded to evaluate the strength of each claimant to the throne; but the king remained cautious, since 'the matter seems more complicated'.[6] Sebastian had left a regency council to rule Portugal in his absence, and on 23 August 1578 its members agreed that Henry should serve as 'governor and defender' of the realm until Sebastian's fate was known for sure. Five days later they proclaimed Henry king – albeit with little enthusiasm, given that in Portugal, 'nothing is done except to mourn our children and relatives and the cost of raising ransoms for them'. The ruler of Fez alone demanded three million ducats in exchange for the 6,000 captives he held, while other victorious Moroccan rulers held perhaps 8,000 more and looked forward to similarly generous compensation.[7]

The proclamation of Henry gave Philip time to win support both in Portugal and abroad for his claim to be heir presumptive and to prepare to fight in case he failed. On 25 August, he commissioned the duke of Alba (still in favour at court) and the marquis of Santa Cruz, his leading military and naval commanders, to draw up plans to capture Larache on the Atlantic coast of Morocco as a way of forestalling any Muslim counter-attack. The two commanders responded with an ambitious plan that involved mobilizing almost all the resources of his Monarchy in the Mediterranean, to which Philip replied:

> I see two, and perhaps three, major difficulties. The first is how we can leave Naples and Sicily so exposed, not knowing for certain whether the Ottoman fleet will come or not . . . The second difficulty is what we should do about Portugal, [if Larache is taken] since it would become a Portuguese conquest. The third is that the campaign would cost a great deal . . . yet we would still need to fund the war in the Netherlands as well.

A few days later, however, the king realized that the forces mobilized against one enemy could, in case of need, be used against another: 'I think it is good to take all these precautions, and find the funds for them, because it is good to be in a state of readiness for all eventualities, both against the Turks and also so that if France should declare war on us they will not find us unprepared.' Philip instructed Delgado to convene a committee of experts to prepare plans to assemble an amphibious force capable of achieving several goals, including the invasion of Portugal, but 'with great secrecy' so that no one 'can penetrate the mystery of the matter'.[8]

At this stage, Philip himself had not entirely 'penetrated the mystery'. On the one hand, he did not know whether Marliano had succeeded in prolonging the

truce with the sultan into 1579, guaranteeing that his Mediterranean possessions would not be attacked by a Turkish fleet. On the other hand, in the words of Don Cristóbal de Moura (Philip's agent in Lisbon), Henry was 'old and exhausted' and 'might die very soon', obliging Philip to enforce his claim to Portugal at short notice. So although the extensive military and naval preparations required for an invasion could not be disguised, claiming that he planned either to attack Larache or to defend Italy enabled Philip to assert plausibly (when challenged by Pope Gregory XIII), 'I do not intend to mobilize against Portugal' – because should Henry's health improve, Philip could indeed attack Larache.[9]

A decade later Philip would once again repeatedly change his plans as he prepared to invade England, and in 1587–8 as in 1578–9, whether or not he deliberately sought to foster the impression of undisciplined thinking, the ensuing confusion produced an important advantage: until almost the last moment, no one could be sure how he would deploy the forces that he had assembled. As an Italian ambassador put it as late as January 1580: 'They still say that His Majesty will travel towards Portugal, but I see no sign of any preparations that convince me that he will . . . In short, this is a deception composed of so many elements, that it is impossible to predict with any confidence what the outcome will be.'[10] How the king would have relished those words!

Many of Philip's ministers expressed great enthusiasm for uniting Castile and Portugal. The *Diálogo llamado Philippino*, a treatise composed to demonstrate the superiority of Philip's claim to the Portuguese throne, explained that he had a mission to unite the Iberian Peninsula because it would advance the union of God's people as a prelude to the recovery of Jerusalem for Christendom. In Lisbon, Moura saw Alcazarquivir as God's gift to his master: 'I trust in God's mercy that he will enlighten Your Majesty so that you will know how to choose the path that is best for your service and benefit of these kingdoms, because Divine Providence does not permit the sort of extraordinary event that has befallen this land without a very good reason.'[11] Although a messianic analysis like this may have appealed to Philip, it failed to impress the surviving Portuguese elite when they assembled to compare the competing claims of the five living descendants of King Manuel. Philip, only son of the Empress Isabel, Manuel's oldest daughter, clearly had a stronger claim than the duke of Savoy, son of Isabel's younger sister; but how did it compare with the claim of Catalina, daughter of Manuel's younger son, married to Portugal's premier noble, the duke of Braganza (himself descended from King Manuel's sister)? Catalina argued that the daughter of a younger son (herself) took precedence over the son of an older daughter (Philip). And what of Don Antonio, the son of one of King Manuel's younger sons? Although a charismatic figure, and one of the richest men in the kingdom, Don Antonio faced two obstacles: he had been taken prisoner at Alcazarquivir, and he was illegitimate. The first disadvantage

was soon resolved: Don Antonio escaped from Morocco and, travelling through Spain incognito, re-entered Portugal, where he received a warm popular reception. His second obstacle was far more serious, especially after King Henry secured papal backing for a declaration of illegitimacy against his nephew and banished him from the court.

Philip's claim also contained some weaknesses. The most serious, according to Moura, was the 'ancient hatred' of the Portuguese towards Castile: 'although many have mellowed, there are still many' who hate Spain. Therefore, he advised Philip, 'Your Majesty must keep a large army and galley fleet on standby for whatever happens' and 'on the day this King closes his eyes, they must converge' on Lisbon. Philip paid heed. Even as he accumulated favourable judgements of his succession claim from carefully selected theologians, he explained to Moura:

> Concerning what you wrote to me about how important it is to be prepared, I have already informed you how we are arranging the necessary preparations for any eventuality with secrecy and dissimulation. And believe me when I say that although I want none of this to be needed, but rather that everything turn out right, I will neglect nothing.

He concluded, 'the ideal is on the one hand to press on with negotiations and on the other to maintain the fear that we may use force'.[12]

Philip used the same combination of 'negotiations' and 'fear' to persuade King Henry to recognize him as his heir before he died. After justifying his title at considerable length, he reminded his uncle menacingly, 'what would be a lawsuit between individuals between princes usually turns into war, with bloodshed, misery and the destruction of kingdoms'.[13] But Henry turned a deaf ear, instead creating a committee of five governors to rule Portugal should he die before the country's legal experts had reached a decision on the succession. Philip therefore kept his secretary of war constantly by his side 'because I may find that the king [of Portugal] dies sooner than expected, which I think would stir up the affairs of that kingdom. So I think it is very important to get everything up to speed and keep it in such a state that, if we wanted, we would need to do nothing more than launch the campaign.'[14] The very next day the last king of the House of Avis died, and the five governors whom he had appointed began to rule Portugal and its empire until a clear successor emerged.

Philip's finest hour

Philip learned of his uncle's death on 4 February 1580, and (according to the Venetian ambassador) for some days 'he withdrew from public view, handling

no business except in writing' while he decided what to do next. 'Nothing else can be attended to until the matter of Portugal has been settled,' he warned his ambassador in Rome. Ten days later, Philip threw off his mask and signed orders to mobilize troops in Extremadura and galleys in Cádiz. He named Santa Cruz to command the fleet and planned to take command of the army in person, as he had done in the Netherlands two decades before. According to Moura, 'I am certain that the presence of your royal person will conquer more than two armies together,' and the Venetian ambassador agreed: 'nothing useful can be undertaken in the proposed campaign unless the king is present'. Nevertheless, he continued perceptively,

> others say the opposite. Recalling that the king is already advanced in years, that he has indifferent health, and that few rulers – especially those of the House of Austria – live long, they fear that any change in lifestyle may cause harm . . . and may even endanger his life, which would not only mean the loss of Portugal but would jeopardize all of Spain too.

One week later, somewhat more tactfully, the president of the council of Castile begged the king not to lead the army and thereby put at risk 'Your Majesty's royal person, and everything that depends on your continued life and health – which is the existence of your kingdoms and dominions, and the fate of the Catholic Church'. Instead, he recommended the appointment of the duke of Alba. The president recognized the 'just dislike that Your Majesty feels towards the duke', but begged him to overcome it.[15]

The king did not welcome this recommendation, but other ministers soon repeated it. For example, Delgado wrote a note that began 'I beg Your Majesty's pardon for what I am about to say,' but 'it seems to me that what matters most here is reputation' and that Alba should take charge of the army because 'he will strike terror into Portugal like no one else'. He concluded slyly, 'if Your Majesty would rather not write to him, preferring that I should go and explain to him Your Majesty's wishes and the current state of affairs and tell him to travel to the front in a coach or litter without coming here [to Madrid], I will do it.'[16] How well Delgado knew his master! Having 'thought hard about what you wrote, since there was much to think about both for and against', Philip accepted Delgado's offer. It was therefore the secretary, not the king, who in February instructed Alba to leave his place of exile and set out for Extremadura to organize an army; and since the king refused to see Alba, Delgado met him en route and briefed him on his task. As Alba wryly observed 'the king sent him off to conquer a kingdom dragging a ball and chain'.[17]

Cardinal Granvelle, once again Philip's principal adviser, insisted on another important policy change: the king must not repeat his mistake during the

Netherlands emergency of the 1560s and stay in his capital (chapter 8). Instead he must move to Extremadura, ready to enter Portugal as soon as it was safe to do so. In March 1580 Philip duly drew up a new testament and left Madrid for Badajoz, only a few miles from the Portuguese border, followed by his wife, his three oldest children and a handful of officials (he deliberately left most of his courtiers and ministers behind, to avoid giving the impression that Castilians would rule Portugal), and in May he moved to Mérida where, finally overcoming his 'dislike', he met Alba. The two men promptly spent three days closeted together finalizing strategy, and afterwards the duke joined the royal family in reviewing an impressive army. At this stage, Philip acted as commander-in-chief, communicating the password each night and arranging the disposition of his troops along the frontier, while Alba acted as his lieutenant. This display of force intimidated the Portuguese governors, who now paid homage to Philip as their sovereign both by right and Divine Providence; but on 19 June 1580 the supporters of Don Antonio proclaimed him king and the new 'sovereign' entered Lisbon, took possession of the royal palace and called on all Portuguese to obey him. The duke of Alba therefore led his army across the frontier and, encountering virtually no opposition, reached the Atlantic coast at Setúbal in just over two weeks. There they joined the naval task force that had just left Cádiz and undertook an operation of astonishing audacity: Alba and his 15,500 soldiers, 170 horses and 13 guns embarked on Santa Cruz's 60 galleys and sailed across the mouth of the Tagus to Cascais – a journey of 125 miles. They landed three days later, and when Cascais refused to surrender, Alba's troops assaulted and sacked it.

This act of brutality angered the king. In a holograph letter, he instructed the duke to 'make sure that there is no sack of Lisbon' because 'the outcry about it, the demand for recompense, and the damage will never end for as long as we live.'[18] An outcry was exactly what Don Antonio hoped for, and he callously sought to provoke Alba to take the capital by storm; but as usual the duke preferred the indirect approach and outflanked his adversaries, while Santa Cruz sailed up the Tagus and took possession of the entire Portuguese navy at anchor. Lisbon paid a ransom of 600,000 ducats to escape a sack.

Alba now proudly reported to his master that 'Here, sire, no one thinks about war any more'. Indeed, 'Your Majesty can take possession and receive complete obedience. We have achieved this in two months less two days: Your Majesty's army entered the kingdom on 27 June, and at midday on 25 August it was all yours.'[19] As usual, the duke exaggerated. Don Antonio escaped and made a stand first at Coimbra and then at Oporto, which fell only in late October – and once again Don Antonio escaped. Alba regarded this as insignificant, but others drew a parallel with what had happened in the Netherlands in 1567, the king among them: 'I think [Alba] said the same about the prince of Orange,'

Philip mused, 'and so we should not relax until we have Don Antonio, dead or alive.'[20] He also worried about how to gain control of the eight Azores islands that had recognized Don Antonio as their sovereign.

Philip's joy at all these victories was also dissipated by the death of Queen Anne and several courtiers, felled by an influenza epidemic. The king too became gravely ill, and although he managed to mount a horse and wear full armour as he entered his new kingdom in December 1580, 'the sorrow and illness he had suffered could be seen in the paleness of his face'. He had to complete his journey in his coach. Nevertheless in April 1581 Philip appeared before the Portuguese Cortes at Tomar, where he was acclaimed king and received the oath of allegiance from his new subjects. It was undoubtedly his finest hour. According to Mateo Vázquez, an eyewitness, 'clothed in brocade, with the sceptre in his hand, His Majesty looked very fine. Don Diego de Córdoba said he looked like King David' (see plate 37).[21]

Philip did not enjoy his coronation – 'As you know, they want to dress me in silk brocade, very much against my will,' he informed his daughters ('against my will' because he still wore mourning for Anne) – but he worked hard to win the affection of his new subjects. He had already abolished the customs posts in Castile that collected taxes on all goods crossing the border, and now he persuaded the Cortes at Tomar to abolish them on the Portuguese side. He also kept a careful eye on protocol: at the frontier he made sure that all the Castilian officials travelling with him laid down their insignia of office; and in 1581, having approved a warrant requiring assistance to an ambassador about to travel from Lisbon to Barcelona, the king scratched out his signature. He explained: 'This warrant, saying "From here to Madrid and from there to Barcelona" will not do. It must read "from the frontier between the kingdoms of Portugal and Castile to Madrid and from there to the frontier between the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon". Let it be done that way.' The king also made sure that his ministers transacted all business concerning Portugal in Portuguese, and he did his best to master the language himself. According to a Spaniard who felt 'as if we were in Turkey', the king's new subjects 'have made him learn the language more by force than by choice with their constant importuning'.[22]

The changing balance of power

Although the new king of Portugal strove to preserve the status quo in domestic matters, he lost no time in exploiting the advantage afforded by the union of crowns to tilt the international balance of power in his favour. In 1580 he had authorized Marliano, still in Istanbul, to renew the armistice with the sultan and thus preserve the peace in the Mediterranean while he annexed Portugal;

and in 1581, despite the efforts of French and English agents at sabotage, Marliano signed a three-year extension of the truce. News of this agreement outraged Gregory XIII and he threatened to revoke the Three Graces (royal taxes on the Spanish Church: chapter 11) 'as a punishment for having made the truce'. Philip responded with the same passive-aggressive combination he had used with previous pontiffs. Did the pope not realize that the truce was merely 'a pause while we increase our strength for war'? Why did His Holiness grant financial benefits to the king of France, 'who is permanently at peace with the Turks',

> so that he can make war for a time with the heretics, which will in the end produce agreements prejudicial to the Holy See itself, but denies them to me, who both placed my patrimonial estates in the Low Countries at risk in order to preserve and maintain our holy Roman Catholic faith in them, and also spends and exhausts so much of the revenue from the other dominions that God has given me in advancing His cause?

In short, 'Why should I be held to a different standard from everyone else?' After the complaints came the threats: 'Since I cannot keep on for long without financial assistance, nor overcome my [Dutch] rebels, who are no less rebels against God, and reduce them to His obedience and mine, if the pope denies me these funds [the Three Graces] and deprives me of the resources I need, he will make it impossible for me to achieve these goals.' Two weeks later, the king made the threat more direct. If Gregory deprived Philip of the tax revenue, he 'should reflect that this will force me to do something that I would never want to do under any circumstances': namely, to make peace with the Dutch Protestants. 'If His Holiness fails to do something that he has such an obligation to do, then I will be blameless before God and the world in whatever I have to do.'[23]

Once again Philip's tactic worked. Gregory renewed the Three Graces – but only at a price: Philip must promise to invade Ireland. In the first flush of capturing Lisbon intact, the duke of Alba wrote expansively that 'if Your Majesty wants to campaign in North Africa' – something the duke had always discouraged while in the Netherlands! – 'this is a good time to do so'. Philip seized on this rash suggestion and, in the margin of the letter, ordered the creation of a committee 'to decide what we should write to the duke about the Irish expedition'. Philip later explained to Alba that 'some days ago His Holiness wrote to me and has insisted several times that he wants to undertake the conquest of England . . . and that a good way to do this would be to land in Ireland'. In return, Philip continued, the pope 'will not only grant me the Three Graces' but was also willing 'to give his name to the venture, so that I do not

need to declare myself'. He asked Alba to 'examine the project with the prudence and zeal with which you normally handle such matters' and then 'consider what is best, draw up plans and send them to me'.[24] In September, Philip provided a fleet to convey to Ireland 800 Spanish and Italian volunteers assembled and paid by the pope; but shortly after they arrived, Elizabeth's forces surrounded and massacred almost all of them.

Philip now shifted his attention to the Azores where all but the largest island, São Miguel, had declared for Don Antonio, who strove to consolidate his position with foreign assistance. In 1582, Filippo Strozzi (who had led a French naval contingent to Holland a decade before: chapter 11) assembled an expeditionary force that included English and French contingents and began the conquest of São Miguel. Philip's forces had relieved Oran and Malta in the 1560s, recaptured Tunis in 1573 and taken Lisbon in 1580, but conquering the Azores presented a very different challenge because they lay a thousand miles west of Portugal. The marquis of Santa Cruz, who possessed extensive experience of combined operations, nevertheless assembled men, munitions and ships in Lisbon for the first-ever attempt to dislodge an enemy protected by the Atlantic Ocean. On 26 June 1582, St Anne's Day, he engaged Strozzi in the first known battle between fleets of sailing warships. According to a veteran of Lepanto, it was fought 'with the greatest fury ever seen', and in the end Strozzi lost ten ships and well over a thousand men, many of whom Santa Cruz summarily executed as rebels.[25] Although this victory recovered São Miguel, the rest of the archipelago remained defiant. The king would need to organize a new amphibious operation.

Muzzling Antonio Pérez and the princess of Éboli

When Philip left Madrid in 1580, he left Granvelle to act *de facto* (although not *de iure*) as governor of Spain, as Cardinal Tavera had done during the absences of his father (chapter 1). Granvelle, as well as the presidents and secretaries of every council, sent consultas to the king in Lisbon, and a week or more later received them back with his rescript. Many of them concerned Antonio Pérez and the princess of Éboli, both of them still under arrest.

After a month's confinement in the house of García de Toledo, Pérez allegedly felt 'so depressed that his host feared for his sanity or his life' and a hostile observer unkindly suggested that he was now so desperate for rehabilitation 'that if His Majesty ordered him to serve Mateo Vázquez as a lackey', Pérez would accept. Such reports induced the king to allow Pérez to return to his own home, where he swore a solemn oath 'that neither he, nor his servants nor his supporters would do any harm to Mateo Vázquez'.[26] But the ex-secretary remained under house arrest, and in December 1580 Antonio Mauriño de

Pazos, president of the council of Castile and Pérez's staunch ally, informed the king that 'confinement and not being able to exercise as he used to do' meant that the ex-secretary suffered from 'depression and indisposition through indigestion, so that the doctors fear serious consequences'. The king replied grudgingly: 'If [Pérez] needs exercise for the sake of his health let him go to the orchard near his house [La Casilla] – but he must not enter the house or anywhere else. He can only be outside, near his orchard, for exercise.' Four months later Pazos tried again, pointing out that Pérez only 'desires what all those in prison desire, which is liberty', and he begged the king 'to show him the mercy that Your Majesty shows to everyone'. Philip remained unsympathetic: 'It seems to me that I overheard somewhere that Pérez and the princess of Éboli still exchange messages, which is no good for either of them.' He insisted that Pazos 'with secrecy and dissimulation' – those words again! – 'must find out if there is any truth in this; and if there is, put a stop to it'.[27]

Instead, reports reached the king that 'in the house of Antonio Pérez there is much excessive card playing, with thousands of ducats changing hands' and that he 'retains a box in a theatre where they perform plays, furnished with silk hangings and seats, and that he pays thirty reals a day for the said box'. One particular rumour angered the king. 'They say that Antonio Pérez goes out accompanied by sixteen pages, some armed with swords, and other people walk close to him like bodyguards,' he complained to Pazos, concluding: 'It would be more appropriate to protect Antonio Pérez by locking him up' – a clear reprimand. Pazos responded by pointing out the glaring anomaly in Pérez's situation: 'If Antonio Pérez has served Your Majesty so badly that he deserves to have his head chopped off, there are plenty of judges able and willing to do it'; but the king replied mysteriously that 'if we could proceed in the matter with an open trial, we would have done so from the first day'.[28]

The president apparently still did not realize that his master could not allow either Pérez or the princess of Éboli 'an open trial', because to do so would reveal his own role in the murder of Escobedo, and that the king had already embarked on a different course of legal action. While still in Madrid, Philip wrote a secret letter 'in my own hand' instructing a trusted minister 'to collect evidence with complete secrecy and discretion' on whether all of his secretaries had 'discharged their duties as they should'. When the minister died, in June 1581 Philip wrote another secret missive 'in my own hand' entrusting the task jointly to Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, a member of the Suprema who had accompanied him to Portugal, and Tomás de Salazar, a member of the Suprema who remained in Madrid. This time, however, Pérez was the only secretary to be targeted, and Philip provided a list of witnesses to be interviewed in secret.[29]

The Tuscan ambassador, Luigi Dovara, was the first to give evidence. In May 1582, he testified under oath that four years before, in order 'to cultivate

the friendship of Antonio Pérez' he had given him 4,000 ducats in the name of the Grand Duke. Then, 'asked what other things he knew and had heard about the said Antonio Pérez', Dovara named many other Italians at court who had given Pérez bribes, and the nature of each one. The judges also took secret depositions from others who had known (and, it emerged, had hated) Pérez for decades, and in August Philip informed them that he needed 'more time to verify and refine the faults that were emerging about Pérez'. Therefore, 'since it is possible to conceal what should not be known or discussed by setting up a *visita* [a tribunal of inquiry], I have decided that we should leave Antonio Pérez in his present situation and carry out all the necessary investigations about him in secret'. After much circumlocution and repetition, Philip concluded: 'Now you must burn this paper'.[30]

Pérez was therefore unaware of his peril when, in September 1582, he once again demanded an open trial – according to Pazos, 'Even if the outcome is that he should lose his head, Pérez would be content'. The king continued to ignore the plight of his ex-secretary, but two months later he took dramatic action regarding the princess. In a supremely patronizing letter, the king wrote:

> Princess of Éboli, my cousin: Bearing in mind, as I should, the long and good service of your husband, Ruy Gómez de Silva, and desiring for that reason to reward and look out for his children, it is necessary for the conservation of his memory, his estates and his wealth to take a different course in his affairs – and in yours – than the one that has prevailed until now. Since you need to concentrate on the good of your soul and your peace of mind, which you can scarcely do when you have to attend to so many and such diverse matters, I have decided to relieve you of the care and custody of [all your children].

Therefore, the king continued, he had named one of his own officials 'to be their guardian and tutor, and also to serve as administrator and chief judge of their fiefs until further notice, giving him full powers by virtue of my office of king and sovereign lord'. The princess would henceforth live under house arrest in her palace at Pastrana. These changes would take immediate effect, and the king demanded obedience 'without any retort, because I will tolerate none'. It was a sentence of civil death against which there could be no appeal.[31]

'The world is not enough'

Having settled the fate of Pérez and the princess to his satisfaction, in spring 1583 Philip left Lisbon and returned to Spain where he concentrated on planning a campaign to recapture Terceira, in the Azores. First, he had to deal with the pretensions of Santa Cruz, who 'wants the rank of grandee, the office of

Captain-General of the Ocean Sea, and a major grant of land'. The king conceded them all, 'although it is outrageous', but his Instructions to the marquis stressed (somewhat unkindly), 'what matters now for your reputation and mine is that you get the job done this time'. He also insisted on 'exemplary punishment' for all who opposed him: 'If anyone should now resist me, and take up arms against me, they cannot avoid judgment under the Laws of War': that is, they must be summarily executed.[32] Exactly one year after his naval victory, Santa Cruz arrived at Terceira with an amphibious force twice as large as the previous one – more than 15,000 men and almost 100 ships – and his Spanish veterans stormed ashore and swiftly captured the island, subjecting it to a three-day sack. The rest of the archipelago now surrendered. At last Philip was master of Portugal and its entire empire.

Santa Cruz's triumph unleashed a wave of euphoria throughout the Iberian Peninsula, to which the king was not immune. On hearing that the crowning victory had again occurred on St Anne's Day, Philip and Mateo Vázquez immediately spotted the coincidence. Apart from intervention by the saint, Vázquez wrote, 'It has just crossed my mind that it must have been the late Queen Anne, our sovereign lady, beseeching God for victory.' The king agreed: 'Although St Anne must have played a large part in these successes, I always thought that the queen must have had a share in them. And what gives me greatest pleasure is that it seems this victory is an indication that there is something in what you say.' Shortly afterwards Philip commissioned his painters at the Escorial to prepare both a picture of St Anne for an altar in the monastery and two frescoes in the royal apartments to commemorate Santa Cruz's spectacular victories (see plate 38).[33]

Other celebrations of the union of crowns took a more aggressive tone. An ambassador in Madrid reported that 'A royal sculptor has received orders, it is said directly from His Majesty, to make some medals with designs that show his lordship over Portugal and the entire Atlantic Ocean'; while a courtier proposed the motto *Nothing is ever hidden*, 'so that all will know that the sun never sets on the kingdoms now unified' under Philip's rule, 'because as night falls in our hemisphere it is daytime in the other'.[34] A medal struck in 1583 showed the king's head with the inscription 'Philip II, king of Spain and New World' on one side, and on the other the uncompromising legend NON SUFFICIT ORBIS ('The world is not enough'), a motto first applied to Alexander the Great (see plate 39). This bold device soon came into general use as the logo of Philip's global empire. When an English party broke into the governor's mansion in Santo Domingo in 1586 they saw the royal arms of Spain atop the globe, with a scroll 'wherein was written these words in Latin NON SVFFICIT ORBIS'. The English found this a 'very notable marke and token of the vnsatiable ambition of the Spanish King and his nation'.[35]

David or Goliath?

Such ambitious claims were not limited to words and images. In August 1583, euphoric from his double victory in the Azores, Santa Cruz urged the king to 'look to God, since the cause is so just and so much His' and remember that

> victories as complete as the one God has been pleased to grant Your Majesty in these islands normally spur princes on to other enterprises; and since Our Lord has made Your Majesty such a great king, you should follow up this victory by making arrangements for the invasion of England next year . . . It is not right that while Your Majesty is in this world a heretical woman who has caused so much harm to that kingdom should live and reign.

Philip accepted this view. He thanked Santa Cruz 'for all you wrote in your holograph letter, offering yourself to lead a new campaign, which you suggest for next year. These are matters that cannot be discussed with certainty now, because they depend on the timing and the events that will take place between then and now'; but he promised 'to speed up the construction of ocean-going galleons' in the shipyards of Portugal and northern Spain, and he asked the marquis to draw up feasibility studies for the conquest of England.[36]

Santa Cruz swiftly assembled a dossier that advocated a landing in irresistible force close to London, since it was both the seat of Tudor power and easily accessible from the sea. In addition, the marquis noted, once his expeditionary force landed in the Thames estuary, reinforcements would be readily available from the Army of Flanders. But before he could devote proper attention to this, Philip received an extraordinary proposal from Pope Gregory XIII: that he should marry Mary Stuart. The Spanish ambassador in Rome explained to a colleague in Madrid that the pope believed 'that in this way [Philip] can once more become king of England', adding defensively that 'the pope expressly told me to write this to His Majesty, but through embarrassment I have chosen to do so through you.' When the king read the letter he could scarcely contain himself: 'I do not feel any embarrassment at being told what should be done,' he told his ambassador, 'but I do feel it with something so inappropriate as this – the more so because I know that I could not fulfil the obligation of governing that kingdom [of England] or of going there, having so many other duties that it is impossible to fulfil even those as I would wish.'[37] The king was no more eager to marry Mary Stuart than he had been to marry Elizabeth Tudor twenty-five years before. Instead, he asked the duke of Parma, his nephew, whether he could prepare and launch from the Netherlands an invasion that would eliminate the queen.

Parma did not rule out the possibility, but given the risk of French assistance to the Dutch during his absence he urged the king to allow him to complete the reconquest of the Netherlands before turning upon England. This evidently impressed Philip, and for the next three years he dropped most other projects in order to concentrate on the Netherlands. For example, for almost a year his advisers had discussed measures to expel the Moriscos from Castile 'in a great expulsion, just as had been done to the Jews' a century before, 'which should be carried out as soon as the fleet returned from Terceira' in autumn 1583. But since 'this required many soldiers, and freedom from other concerns that might cause distraction', when the victorious fleet returned, 'the plan was abandoned. Instead, it was decided to send the troops aboard the fleet to the Netherlands.'[38] In addition, the king built up an impressive war chest. In 1584 a group of visitors touring the Madrid Alcázar marvelled at the room containing 'the king's private treasury with six huge chests containing coins, each said to hold four hundred thousand ducats. Besides these we saw a further six boxes, holding a very great sum of marked gold, and these are kept untouched against any grave necessity.'[39] The king did not intend to squander these assets. In spring 1582, apparently for the first time, he ordered his treasury officials to prepare an imperial budget for an entire year (June 1582–June 1583). The sums required were large – 2.4 million ducats for the Netherlands; 1.8 million for the Azores – but Don Hernando de Vega, president of the council of Finance, predicted a small surplus. Philip was not convinced:

> Obviously, more will be needed to get us through 1583, because the total in the budget is scarcely enough for the first half of the year, although it might be possible to anticipate something from 1584 in the second half of 1583. In the end, however, everything will collapse if we fail to find adequate funds. Take a look and discuss it with the secrecy that you can see the matter requires.[40]

In June 1583 – the point at which Vega's budget ended – the king took his fiscal planning somewhat further. In the Netherlands 'the present necessity is so great', he informed Vega, 'that it would be of the greatest importance to be able to provide at once some 400,000 or 500,000 ducats; and for the future it would be very good to arrange a [regular] provision by months, from 150,000 to 200,000 ducats per month'. The president promised to 'meet Your Majesty's obligations in such a way that you will scarcely need any other treasury officials'; but if he expected that his confidence would end the king's nagging, he was wrong. 'Finding this money is really, really important,' Philip began his rescript, and 'so I charge you to do everything with great speed, because time is of the essence; otherwise, our efforts will be in vain'. Then his tone softened slightly: 'It is good that you have begun to discuss this large provision

[of money]. So proceed with it and ensure that you do not forget about it, since it will be the remedy and relief of everything for the two years to come, 1584 and 1585.'[41]

Parma did not spend all of the funds he received from Spain on his troops. He used 25,000 ducats for a very different purpose: rewarding the relatives of Balthasar Gérard, one of the king's Burgundian subjects who, on 10 July 1584, assassinated Prince William of Orange, whom Philip had declared an outlaw to be captured or killed at will. The immediate reaction at the court of Spain to Gérard's deed was ecstasy. 'With the dawn this morning came the news about Orange,' Granvelle (in Madrid) crowed to the king: 'Our Lord must want to achieve something really good in the Netherlands since he has removed the keystone of the rebellion.' Mateo Vázquez also rejoiced when the news reached the Escorial: 'The death of Orange is great news, and I hope that God in his mercy will now draw those wars to an end, because Your Majesty deserves it; and if there must be wars let them be abroad and not at home.' Philip replied: 'Everything is just as you say: it seems to be a wonderful opportunity, and I trust in God that things in the Netherlands will work out well.' The following day, Granvelle noted a happy coincidence: Orange's death had occurred exactly one month after that of the duke of Alençon and Anjou, titular head of the Dutch rebels: 'Alençon died on 10 June; and Orange on 10 July; and if the 10th of this month [of August], St Lawrence's Day, should see the death of Alençon's mother [Catherine de' Medici] the world would lose little.'[42]

This rejoicing proved premature. The duke was the last male member of the house of Valois and, because Salic Law limited royal succession to the male line, the Protestant Henry of Bourbon, king of Navarre became the new heir presumptive to the French throne, which raised the spectre of an openly hostile regime in Paris. Philip had to react. For many years he had offered the duke of Guise funds to sustain a paramilitary organization, 'the League', dedicated to ensuring that a Catholic would succeed Henry III. As soon as Philip learned of Anjou's death, he increased Guise's payments, and promised full military intervention should civil war break out. In return, the duke promised to further Philip's designs elsewhere in Europe.

Spain began to reap the benefits of this initiative almost immediately. In March 1585, isolated and intimidated, Henry III signed a treaty with Guise that ceded several important towns to the League and promised to work towards the extirpation of Protestantism in France. Meanwhile Philip agreed that Duke Charles Emmanuel of Savoy should marry his daughter Catalina. The ceremony took place in March 1585, and a year later Catalina gave birth to the king's first grandchild, a son. Since both the infant's grandmothers belonged to the House of Valois, he was also a potential heir to the throne of France. At the same time, in the Netherlands Parma used the regular supply of troops

and treasure from Spain to blockade the major towns of the South Netherlands, and one by one they surrendered: Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Mechelen and finally, in August 1585, Antwerp.

These military and diplomatic triumphs thoroughly alarmed Queen Elizabeth, because if Philip gained control of France, Portugal and the entire Netherlands, Protestant England was doomed. Her secretary of state, Sir Francis Walsingham, prepared 'A plott for the annoying of the king of Spayne' that consisted of a trade embargo with the Spanish Netherlands; seizing Spanish vessels off Newfoundland; sending England's most successful naval commander, Sir Francis Drake, to raid the West Indies; and providing assistance to Philip's Dutch and Portuguese rebels. For a while the queen hesitated: thus although she gave Drake money to raise a fleet of over thirty vessels and 1,600 men, she forbade them to leave port; and while she welcomed the Portuguese pretender, Don Antonio, to her court, she gave him no funds. Her only unequivocal action was to place an embargo on all English trade with the Spanish Netherlands in April 1585, provoking Philip to retaliate: the following month he issued a proclamation that ordered the arrest of all foreign ships in the ports of the peninsula, with the sole exception of the French. The decision proved a disaster, because when a party of Spanish officials tried to arrest the English vessel *Primrose*, the master decided to fight his way out, taking with him to England not only the Spanish boarding party but also a copy of the proclamation.

Elizabeth and her ministers studied the exact wording of the proclamation, and immediately noted that it affected only ships from Protestant lands. Interrogation of the Spaniards captured aboard the *Primrose* offered little reassurance: one of them informed his captors that 'hearing that the Hollanders seake ayde in England and fearing [lest] they shalbe ayded', King Philip 'meaneth by this arreste to feare the Englishe from ayding them'. Even more alarming, an intercepted letter from a Spanish merchant in Andalusia to his partner in Rouen spoke unequivocally of 'the state of war that exists between us and England'.[43]

These revelations followed Elizabeth's discovery of a conspiracy to assassinate her and enthrone Mary Stuart in which Spanish ambassador Don Bernardino de Mendoza was so clearly implicated that early in 1584 she expelled him. Orange's assassination shortly afterwards confirmed that Philip would stop at nothing to eliminate his foes, and so Elizabeth resurrected Walsingham's 'Plott'. In June 1585, shortly after the return of the *Primrose*, she ordered an English squadron to sail to Newfoundland and attack the Iberian fishing fleet and authorized any of her subjects affected by the embargo to make good their losses by plundering ships sailing under Philip's colours. In August, Elizabeth signed a formal treaty with envoys sent by Philip's Dutch rebels that obliged her to provide over 6,000 regular troops for their army, pay

one-quarter of their defence budget and supply an experienced councillor to lead their army; and she allowed Drake to leave Plymouth with his thirty ships and 1,600 soldiers.

In October 1585, Drake's men ravaged villages in Galicia for ten days, desecrating churches, collecting booty and taking hostages. This was far more than 'A plott for the annoying of the king of Spayne': it was an open declaration of war on Philip. The monarch who at Tomar had 'seemed like King David' now began to resemble Goliath.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

'The most potent monarch in Christendom'

Many of Philip II's subjects celebrated the fact that the union of crowns with Portugal made him the ruler of an 'innumerable, not to say infinite, multitude of kingdoms, lordships, provinces and various dominions in all four quarters of the world', forming 'the greatest empire that has been seen since the creation of the world'. This unprecedented aggregation of power also impressed others. The king of Spain, wrote one fearful Englishman, was 'the most potent monarch in Christendom', who 'hath now got a command so wide, that out of his dominions the sunne can neither rise nor set'. According to another, Philip had become 'A prince whose empire extended so farre and wide, above all emperors before him, that he might truly say, *Sol mihi semper lucet*: the sunne always shineth upon me'.[1]

'Doctors are terrible people'

Who was the 'me' upon whom the sun always shone? In 1582 the Netherlander Philippe de Caverel provided a vivid description of his sovereign after an audience in Lisbon. 'He is of less than average height,' Caverel began, 'with broad shoulders and chest, and a large, pale face' with prominent red lips, 'especially the lower one, a sign of his Habsburg ancestry. His eyes are somewhat red, like those of a man who reads and works a lot, even at night.' His beard and his hair were entirely white, 'which seems a little premature' (the king was then 56 years old). When Philip returned to Madrid the following year, according to the French ambassador 'the king begins to age', and 'his face is not as fair, showing that his spirit must be borne down by cares, making him more melancholy than he used to be'; while Cardinal Granvelle noted that his master 'wore his beard a little longer than most people, and rounded in the same way that the emperor's used to be. Since it has gone white, he now resembles the said

emperor strongly.'[2] But the resemblance stopped there: Philip would live to be 71, whereas his father died aged 58.

Several lifestyle choices explain the king's longevity. Once he ceased to take part in tournaments, around 1562, the king suffered only minor accidents – such as the day he got on a boat and 'my leg went into the place where the mast goes' and 'I scraped my shin, which hurt a lot for a while' – and except for the influenza that nearly killed him in 1580, he was seldom seriously ill until he turned 60 in 1587. Like everyone else, of course, he experienced numerous minor health problems. Above all, the long hours sitting at his desk, and the lack of fibre in his diet, meant that he often suffered from constipation and piles, which explains the 'rings made of bone which are said to be good for haemorrhoids' in the inventory of his possessions after his death. The same source records a 'silver goblet for the purges to be administered to His Majesty', while the accounts of the palace pharmacy show frequent resort to both emetics and enemas. In a letter to his children he described how he took one cordial every morning 'which tastes awful because it contains rhubarb' and another every other day that contained agrimony.[3] The king also preserved his health by eating carefully, exercising regularly and paying close attention to personal hygiene. As his valet later observed, Philip 'was by nature the most clean, tidy and fastidious person that has ever walked on the earth'. The 'Inventory of the Late King's Goods' contains striking evidence of this. He owned a toothbrush made of ebony inlaid with gold; a box containing toothbrushes and sponges; a bowl to hold tooth powder and toothpaste; and (when these precautions failed) 'five large instruments for pulling teeth' and 'a gold wand with rounded ends to cauterize teeth'. He also owned special instruments to clean out his ears and scrape his tongue, a hairbrush and a brush to clean combs, and nail scissors and a manicure set – all of gold or silver.[4]

Despite these preventive measures, stomach bugs sometimes laid low 'the most potent monarch in Christendome'. In summer 1581 he told his daughters that 'I have not felt well recently: I don't know whether it's because I ate a lot of melons the other day' but 'I have been in bed for two days'. Two years later, 'while I was hearing Mass, my stomach started churning'; and in 1588 'when I got up today I felt a terrible pain in my stomach or my gut, I'm not sure which, but one or other of them hurt a lot'.[5] The king also suffered his fair share of winter ailments. One night in February 1576 he provided Mateo Vázquez with a comprehensive medical bulletin: 'I still have the congestion in my chest, which exhausts me; and although my arthritis hurts from time to time, it does not make my head ache – but my cold certainly does!' In December 1584, he reported that 'my cold has prevented me from returning these papers to you, although I really wanted to do so; and now I can do even less because I have a

terrible headache'. 'I cannot handle any further business just now,' he complained in February 1587, 'because I have a terrible cold – which I already had last night. I am certainly not fit to read or write.' When more papers nevertheless arrived the king lost his temper and scribbled on the dossier (as he sent it back): 'Look what I get to cure my cold!'[6]

Sometimes his complaints suggest hypochondria – in 1573 Philip told the duke of Alba that 'I think the stress I feel about what is happening [in the Netherlands] is partly to blame for my fever'; and in October 1588 he told Mateo Vázquez that 'I have got a terrible cough and cold, and I am convinced it comes from the papers because as soon as I pick them up I start to cough' – but severe stress can indeed induce physical problems.[7] In addition, the king could not handle his paperwork when 'I have gout [*la gota*] in my right hand' or 'His Majesty still has gout in his right wrist' – and because he was right-handed this prevented him from writing.[8] In later years, he lay in bed for half an hour each morning while his valet gently massaged his legs and feet to ease the pain. It seems likely that Philip suffered from the same sort of arthritis as his father, who also had periodic bouts of debilitating 'gout'.

In general, although Philip kept several doctors on his payroll, he was often reluctant to accept their advice because (as he put it) 'Doctors are terrible people'.[9] In 1572, when his nine-month-old son and heir fell ill and the court doctors blamed his wet-nurse, Philip showed contempt for their diagnosis – or rather, diagnoses: 'The doctors have submitted so many different opinions, both about medicines and cleanliness, that no one can know which to trust'. Shortly afterwards the king convinced himself that (as with architects, theologians and others) he knew best: 'It would be better to avoid clysters and bloodletting, which are sometimes very bad, and with a stable regime one could achieve the same result with less risk.' When the doctors insisted on administering their classic procedures, the king counter-attacked: 'We should think carefully before allowing any clyster for the prince or his wet-nurse, which may upset rather than benefit them.' The king's claim to medical omniscience had not abated two decades later. In September 1590 many courtiers at the Escorial fell ill, and one of them asked that the sick should receive two loads of ice from the special 'ice wells' created by the king high in the Guadarrama mountains. Philip disagreed: 'I think the doctors should rather stop fruit and snow being taken by some of the sick . . . I do not take drinks with ice. It does more harm than good to everyone else at that time of year.'[10]

Drowning in paperwork

His robust health allowed the king to insist (as Philippe de Caverel noted during his visit to Lisbon) 'on seeing practically everything'. Therefore, the

king's periodic complaints about exhaustion continued. 'There have been so many meetings, and they have eaten up so much of my time, that I can't do any more now. It is already very late,' he complained to Vázquez in February 1584, adding 'I have never seen business pile up so often.'[11] A few months later, the faithful secretary suggested that business might not 'pile up' quite so fast if one of the small group of trusted councillors who normally accompanied the king read through the consultas sent by a particular council before forwarding them with a recommendation. The king warmed to this idea: 'I will approve those where you endorse their recommendation, and you will note or draft a reply when you do not approve – and all before I see them. I will see them when I sign them.' Vázquez promised obsequiously that 'in order to bring Your Majesty some relief, I want to work day and night, just like your humble slave', and now proposed that each of the chosen councillors should spend half an hour a day with the king in order to resolve outstanding matters. Philip voiced misgivings at the mention of meetings:

> Even this will take up a lot of time, because I will have to spend half an hour with you [inquisition and patronage], and the same with the count of Chinchón [Aragon and Italy], with Don Juan de Idiáquez [state], with Antonio de Eraso [America and treasury], and with Don Cristóbal [de Moura] for Portugal – which does not leave me much time. But not having to write out my decisions will be a relief.[12]

The following year the king made another change: he recalled Don Juan de Zúñiga, the son of his old governor, to preside over this group of senior ministers, which became known as the *Junta de Noche* (the Night Committee) because it met every evening to discuss the consultas prepared by each council that morning, adding a summary and a suggestion for action, so that the king could immediately identify the issues that required his personal attention.

The hidden king

A senior minister observed perceptively at this time that 'Our Master loves peace and quiet, and likes to govern and control the world in silence, relying on people who do the same.' Indeed, 'we have ample proof that, among these, the people he likes best are those who make the least noise.'[13] In an effort to secure 'the least noise', after his return from Portugal Philip spent far less time in his capital. He now passed almost every summer and the major religious holidays at the Escorial, with lengthy visits in spring to Aranjuez and in autumn to the Pardo. While in Madrid, Philip's architectural alterations to the Alcázar created a complex of private rooms so that he scarcely appeared in public except for

major court ceremonies and major religious festivals. In 1587 an observer noted that Philip 'takes refuge in the apartments recently completed' – and 'his success can be seen from the fact that he avoids audiences there better than either in the Pardo or the Escorial'. The historian Luis Cabrera de Córdoba agreed: 'Even at Easter and Christmas, he does not attend Mass in the royal chapel, hearing it in his oratory with as little fuss as if he were not in the palace.' The king now travelled between his various residences 'secretly in his coach with the curtains drawn' so that he could not see his subjects and they could not see him.[14]

The king could not hide from his paperwork, however, although as before his insistence on dealing personally with 'trivia' was partly to blame. Thus in 1586 he devoted entire days to preparing his Proclamation on Etiquette, a document that declared in minute detail the styles of address to be used by his subjects – not only between lords and vassals but even between parents and children – and specified who could and could not use the form 'vos'. It also established the correct form of address for senior ministers, nobles, clerics, each member of the royal family and the king himself – who insisted that instead of 'Sacra Católica Real Majestad' everyone must now address him as 'Señor' (the same as addressing God). Philip kept revising drafts of the proclamation until even he was at a loss for words: in the clause that determined the weighty issue of who would have the right to place coronets above their coats of arms, he finally gave up on the syntax, telling Vázquez in frustration: 'Put whatever seems best – "para" or "por" – because I can't decide'. That was on 11 September 1586, but the king continued to fuss over the details for almost another month, and even when he returned the final text to Vázquez on 8 October he retained some misgivings: 'Here is the signed version: getting it done was no mean feat, given all there is to do. Although a word or two remain uncertain, I think we can stop editing because it does not matter at all.'[15] 'It does not matter at all'? After preparing so many drafts, even the patient Vázquez must have ground his teeth.

Perhaps the king's obsessive attention was justified in this case, because the Proclamation on Etiquette outraged courtiers and ambassadors alike, while the pope placed it on the Index and threatened the king with excommunication. But did the king really need to decide in person other apparently inconsequential matters at this time, including the disposition of the church benefices vacated by the death of Cardinal Granvelle; who should travel in which coach and how he should be greeted in each town on the royal Progress to Zaragoza; and who should be chosen as cook in his children's kitchen, a post that attracted twenty applicants?

With so many trivia (*menudencias*) to distract and drain him, the pile of consultas awaiting the king's attention grew inexorably. In 1588, when Vázquez told Philip that he had 800 consultas to review and resolve, Philip replied wearily that things were not nearly so bad: the unread consultas around his

desk numbered 'only' 300. A few days later, one of the valets responsible for managing those unread documents begged his colleague, 'please stop sending papers until His Majesty is able to deal with them. It is torture for some of us here to read the letters and other papers that arrive from so many sources, and to write, write, write!'[16] The following year the general of the Jeronimite Order, whose predecessors had enjoyed direct access to the king during the construction of the Escorial, complained to Vázquez that an earlier letter to the king had not been answered. Philip answered sadly: 'The blame for the delay is mine, because with the pressure of business I have not yet been able to see it or order a reply. You had better tell the general this: that one cannot always do what one wants.' The situation deteriorated yet further after Vázquez's death in May 1591. Three months later, his successor as private secretary complained that several important papers had not been returned with a decision, and once again Philip apologized: 'I am very sorry that the pressure of business should be such that it does not leave me time to see to these things, or many others that I should do, but I cannot manage any more. However I shall do everything possible.'[17]

'The lack of leaders'

The loss of a trusted minister like Vázquez was one of Philip's worst nightmares. When in 1577 the secretary made a three-day pilgrimage to Barajas and asked the king's permission to retire and serve God there, Philip was horrified. 'Village life is very good for the body,' he conceded, 'but for the soul I believe that one can serve God much better here [at court], especially in something so important and necessary as helping me, because without lots of help I don't know how I could carry such a burden.' He concluded briskly: 'And so I am very confident that you will gladly [continue to] shoulder your part of the burden'. When, three years later, a council president succumbed to the influenza epidemic that swept Castile, Philip again complained selfishly that if he died 'he will be a great loss to me. It's simply dreadful how many are falling by the wayside and how few remain.'[18]

The king 'worried about those who are falling by the wayside' in part because of 'the difficulty of finding suitable people to fill vacant posts', or (as he put it) the 'lack of leaders' (*falta de cabezas*). When a complaint arrived from Naples about the need to choose better officials because 'they hold the king's honour and conscience in their hand,' Philip scribbled grumpily: 'If deeds were as easy as words in these matters, and if I were God and knew everyone's inner nature, this would be easy; but we are men, not gods.' In 1572, a senior official charged by the king with evaluating candidates to serve as president of the council of Castile disqualified almost everyone for one reason or another: Dr Martín de Velasco was a distinguished canon lawyer and an able minister, but he has 'children and

grandchildren'; Don Antonio de Padilla was not tall enough ('his height counts against him because public figures, such as presidents, should adequately represent royal authority)'; and so on.[19] At least Philip did not discriminate on the basis of background. A surprising number of his senior advisers were either illegitimate (Antonio Pérez, Mateo Vázquez, Juan de Ovando, Antonio Gracián) or had Jewish ancestors (Gonzalo Pérez, and probably Diego de Espinosa) – circumstances that would have prevented their rise to prominence in other walks of life. The king came to appreciate the talents of others through their fathers (Granvelle was the son of Charles V's principal adviser on foreign affairs; Don Juan de Idiáquez, Pedro de Escobedo and Antonio Pérez were all sons of royal secretaries; Don Luis de Requesens and Don Juan de Zúñiga were the sons of the king's governor) or their uncles (Juan Vázquez de Molina, nephew of Francisco de Los Cobos, and his nephew Juan Vázquez de Salazar; Don Francisco de Bobadilla, nephew of the count of Chinchón). He also made use of senior clerics as council presidents (six of Philip's eight presidents of the council of the Indies and all Inquisitors-General) and even as viceroys; and he appointed many less eminent clerics as council secretaries (Gabriel de Zayas as well as Gonzalo Pérez and Mateo Vázquez) and ambassadors (Álvaro de la Quadra and Diego Guzmán de Silva, both sent to Protestant England).

Most of Philip's viceroys and ambassadors came from the ranks of the Spanish aristocracy, however – although this often presented the king with difficulties. In 1575, when trying to find the right candidate to serve as viceroy of Naples, 'having thought about it a lot over the past few days, it seems to me that the person most appropriate – or, to put it better, with fewest drawbacks, because I find no one without them – is the marquis of Mondéjar . . . I find so many drawbacks in all the rest,' the king sighed, 'that I dare not name any of them.' Four years later, when reviewing a long list of noblemen proposed by Vázquez as majordomo for the queen, the king again complained: 'I will think about them, and about any others who occur to me, because I really want to get this right,' but he added wearily, 'undoubtedly I will not find the person I would like to find. Instead I have to choose from the ones available.'[20]

In the first half of his reign, Philip addressed the problem of 'lack of leaders' by increasing the ranks of the aristocracy: he created six new dukedoms (all of them for Ruy Gómez and his allies), nineteen new marquisates and two new earldoms (many for members of the new ducal families and the rest for established noble families, such as the Zúñiga); but for the rest of his reign he created only six new titles of nobility and left vacant numerous positions in the royal household normally held by nobles (no Master of the Horse after 1579, no majordomo after 1582 and so on). The catalyst of this change seems to have been the defiant behaviour of the duke of Alba (chapter 14) combined with the plan of some grandees to protest about the arrest and imprisonment of the

princess of Éboli without trial. The president of the council of Castile relayed to the king a warning from a grandee that some of his colleagues, assembled in Madrid to swear loyalty to the new prince of Asturias, 'had resolved to petition Your Majesty after the ceremony to set the princess free'. Pazos told the grandee 'that I was not sure this was wise, and advised him to think about it carefully'. The king's reply was both firm and dismissive: 'You gave a good reply,' he said. 'This would have been very ill-advised . . . Make sure you take appropriate steps to prevent them.'[21]

Many aristocrats already regarded royal service as unattractive. Some flatly refused to accept the posts that Philip offered them, while others agreed to serve only after protracted haggling for major rewards. Thus in 1568 Philip asked his former chief page, Don Luis de Requesens, to serve as lieutenant-general of the Mediterranean fleet, but he initially demanded in addition the post of viceroy of Sicily. When the king demurred, Requesens requested (and received) the rank of councillor of State and War, a guarantee that his son would succeed him as Comendador Mayor of Castile, plus a grant of 15,000 ducats in cash and an annual salary of 10,000 ducats, and '1500 for the gentlemen who would accompany him'. He accepted only when he had got his way. Five years later, Requesens refused to accept appointment as governor-general of the Netherlands until Philip promised to provide further cash incentives and permission for his daughter to marry a grandee.[22] Another egregious case of blackmail occurred in 1588, when the king appointed the duke of Medina Sidonia as Captain-General of the Ocean Sea. In a letter to Mateo Vázquez, with whom he expected (correctly) that Philip would discuss the matter, the wealthiest aristocrat in Spain claimed that if he accepted the post he 'would leave my family deeply in debt, with a young wife and four children, the oldest of them only nine years old. Sacrificing myself like this' for the king's service, the duke continued, 'causes me acute pain' – and to ease that pain, he asked for the grant of large estates to two of his sons 'before I embark'. The duke's brazenness irritated Philip, who told Vázquez: 'Write him a warm letter assuring him that whatever may happen to him – and I hope that God will show him favour – I will look after his children as they deserve even if he should die on this campaign.' He added: 'This is just to you: I intend to grant the estates to his two sons when he returns, and also if he dies (which I hope to God he will not), but I do not want you to tell him or anyone else this for now.'[23]

'Only a hair's breadth separates the king's smile from his dagger'

Even when suitable nominees agreed to serve, some of them later disappointed, deceived and occasionally betrayed the king. In all such cases, he proved implacable, giving rise to the popular saying that 'Only a hair's breadth

separates the king's smile from his dagger'. He imprisoned Antonio Pérez and banished Prior Don Antonio de Toledo, and although both of them had worked by his side for years the king refused to see them ever again. In 1570 he approved the judicial murder of Baron Montigny, who had served the king and his father as courtier and diplomat since 1548 (chapter 8) and in 1578 of Juan de Escobedo, a prominent royal minister for twelve years (chapter 14). Six years later he arrested Don Martín de Acuña, who had helped to negotiate the first Hispano-Ottoman truce, and when Acuña confessed under torture to selling state secrets to the Turks the king sentenced him to be secretly strangled in his cell. Philip nevertheless continued to favour the families of these offenders. The wife and children of Pérez received a state pension until they died; Pedro de Escobedo became a royal secretary; Acuña's son inherited part of his father's state pension and his brother became Philip's ambassador to Savoy. This was typical. According to Fray Diego de Chaves, who probably knew Philip better than anyone, 'His Majesty never dismissed anyone unless they had committed some fault, but rather honoured and promoted those who served him.' He 'felt obliged and bound by his reputation and honour', Chaves added, 'to avoid giving the impression that he had erred in making an appointment, or that a minister had not deserved the rewards that he had bestowed in the past'.[24]

Philip made use of three mechanisms to keep his officials honest: his own direct scrutiny; administrative review; and the Inquisition. Apart from insisting that his ministers write directly to him in letters 'to be placed in the king's hands' (chapter 4), Philip also allowed discontented subjects to send a formal delegation to court at his expense. Thus in 1579 the king reminded the viceroy of Naples that 'it has never been, nor is it now, my wish or intention to deny our vassals direct access to Us, provided they have a just cause'. Delegations from all over the Monarchy took advantage of this dispensation, and despite the obstacles posed by distance the king showed special concern that 'we should receive and be informed of anything that concerns' his subjects in America.[25] Moreover, thanks to his insistence on signing in person all the letters and warrants issued in his name, Philip sometimes spotted an injustice or abuse. Thus the son of an official of the council of the Indies used his inside contacts to steal several hundred ducats of silver off a ship newly arrived from America in 1580. He was found out, and sentenced by the council to four years' exile and a fine of fifty ducats, which it later halved on appeal. This was extremely lenient, but the condemned man unwisely appealed to the council again and, no doubt out of respect for his father, they recommended further clemency to the king. Although the consulta was one of perhaps hundreds placed on Philip's desk that day, it caught his eye. 'The offence was serious,' he reminded the council, 'and deserved severe punishment. Seeing that the

sentence has already been moderated on appeal – which should not have happened – there is no reason to reduce it now by a single day.'[26]

The second mechanism used by Philip to keep his officials honest consisted of two types of administrative review. All executive officers of the Spanish Monarchy faced a period of scrutiny, known as a *residencia*, immediately after their turn of duty ended. During this public process a royal judge (normally the official's successor) investigated any charges of misconduct, and afterwards submitted his report to a special committee of the council of Castile (the Cámara de Castilla), which then prepared a consulta for the king. Of almost 600 consultas on *residencias* into the performance of corregidores (chief magistrates) of the cities of Castile conducted in the course of Philip's reign, some 75 recommended punishment – more than enough to keep others on their toes. The *residencia* was routine and universal, but whenever the king suspected malfeasance, he commissioned a more searching investigation known as a *visita*, carried out in secret so that an official often only found that he was under investigation when he was charged. Philip employed this procedure against a few leading ministers (like Francisco de Eraso and Antonio Pérez) and a larger number of lesser officials suspected of corruption. In his history of the king's reign, Cabrera de Córdoba recorded the fate of a treasury official who, although apparently 'a very capable minister', had built a house far beyond his means. Philip 'set up a rigorous *visita* that suspended him from office and fined him 11,000 ducats. He lost royal favour so completely' that when 'the president of the council of Finance interceded for him, the king replied "Take note: that man is dead."'[27]

If these instruments of control proved inadequate or inappropriate, Philip could always turn to the Inquisition. In 1559 he allowed the Holy Office to prosecute Fray Bartolomé Carranza, the man he had appointed regent of Spain and guardian of his son should he die, and for the next three years he allowed Inquisitors to interrogate his ministers, his sister and even himself on the friar's conduct (chapter 7). Two decades later, the Inquisitors intercepted a letter from Don Bernardo de Bolea, vice-chancellor of Aragon and thus the senior official of the kingdom, which included some phrases of questionable religious orthodoxy. Anxious to 'keep my conscience clear', the king suggested that Inquisitor-General Quiroga consult the royal confessor, and the two clerics suggested that Bolea make a 'spontaneous' self-denunciation to an Inquisitor, who would impose 'the appropriate penance. This should all be done in secret so that nobody will know.' In this way, the king upheld the dignity of the office while reminding a prominent minister that his thoughts as well as his deeds must be pure.[28] Philip thus wrote the truth when he assured Quiroga in 1574 that 'I will always favour and further the affairs of the Holy Office, because I fully understand the reasons and obligation to do so, and for me more than anyone'. Again

in 1592, after the intervention of the inquisitors of Zaragoza in the trial of Antonio Pérez provoked the revolt of Aragon, the king declared that 'the principal reason that led me to take the matter so seriously' was that he wished to demonstrate to all his subjects that they must 'obey and respect the Holy Office'.[29]

The supreme lawgiver

Although Philip thus deferred meekly to the Holy Office, he insisted on having the last word in all other judicial matters because, as Mateo Vázquez put it, 'Your Majesty is the embodiment of the law.' The king acted as supreme lawgiver in four distinct areas, starting with the royal domain. Thus when the count of Cifuentes built a watermill on the Tagus just upstream from his palace at Aranjuez, Philip complained that it reduced the water available for the royal gardens and asked the count to remove it, and when he refused in 1569 the king sued his vassal in the local court at Toledo. Two years later, the judges decided in his favour, but the count of Cifuentes immediately appealed the case to the chancery at Valladolid. This clearly irritated the king (whose beloved gardens continued to suffer) and he wrote a peremptory note ordering the judges 'to deal with this matter with diligence and care so that it may be settled as quickly as possible because it is our personal suit and affects our royal patrimony and treasury'. The king intervened directly in another case involving his domain in 1569. A guard at the Pardo palace caught two poachers red-handed with seven rabbits. The poachers drew their swords, half killed the guard, and escaped. Philip himself sentenced the two poachers to death (for resisting arrest, not for poaching: 'There is no doubt that poaching is not a capital offence,' the king admitted) and also banished the poachers' wives from their village for two years – albeit with some reluctance: 'With wives one has to be moderate, on account of the obligation they have to their husbands in such matters', and furthermore 'a wife should not lose what should be her own because of a crime committed by her husband'. But these wives had been caught poaching with their husbands, and so they must pay. The king was determined to protect his game, and (like other landowners) he called constantly for more vigilance, more prosecutions and harsher penalties.[30]

Conversely, the king sometimes intervened in the legal system to exercise his prerogative of mercy. Every Good Friday, his almoner presented 'many cases of men condemned to death who had been forgiven by their victims so that the king could absolve them of the legal consequences too . . . And he pardoned them.' Philip did the same to celebrate events which he saw as special favours from God. Thus after the victory of Lepanto and the birth of Prince Fernando in 1571 'the king joyfully issued a general pardon to all prisoners in Spain and America

who had not committed a crime against others'; and eight years later, when he entered Portugal as king, he freed the prisoners in the jail of each town through which he passed.[31]

In this, the king exercised the same prerogative of mercy as other heads of state, but he also acted as 'the embodiment of the law' in two further ways. Whenever his judges found gaps in the law, Philip formulated general rules because, as he once wrote, 'When experience reveals major obstacles in the execution of some law, the king can and must suspend and annul it'; and in 1575 he reminded the president of the council of Castile that 'although enforcing justice is our principal obligation, the manner in which we do it also matters'.[32] On the other hand, he sometimes used his 'absolute royal power' to override existing legislation. Thus in 1559 he signed a codicil to his testament that explicitly overrode the *Siete Partidas*, the fundamental law of Castile, concerning the age at which, should he die, his 'son and universal heir' Don Carlos could start to rule: should the prince remain unmarried at that time, he would remain a minor until age 20, as the *Partidas* stated, but if he should then be married, then 'as king and sovereign, recognizing no superior in temporal affairs', Philip declared this part of the *Partidas* should 'cease and have no force': Don Carlos would exercise full powers at once.[33] The king occasionally used a similar formula to justify a questionable action. In 1557 he authorized two ministers to conclude an alliance 'by virtue of our own will, personal knowledge, and absolute royal power that we wish to exercise in this matter as king and sovereign, recognizing no superior in temporal affairs'; and in 1582 he deprived the princess of Éboli of 'the care and custody' of her children in spite of the explicit terms of the testament of her late husband Ruy Gómez, 'as king and sovereign, to whom such authority belongs'.[34] He also issued hundreds of warrants rehabilitating those condemned by the Inquisition (or their descendants). Thus in 1589 Joan Sánchez, son of a man 'condemned for the crime of heresy' by the Inquisitors of Murcia, protested to the king that he 'was disqualified from holding public office in these our realms': Sánchez now asked for a dispensation so that he could 'exercise criminal jurisdiction'. The king first consulted 'our council of the Inquisition; which gave its approval', and thereupon signed a warrant 'by virtue of our own will, personal knowledge, and absolute royal power that we wish to exercise in this matter' that allowed Sánchez to hold public office 'notwithstanding any laws and proclamations to the contrary'.[35]

Such elaborate rationales remained rare: normally Philip saw no need to explain why he should not disobey his own laws whenever he considered it necessary, even when ordering the extrajudicial execution of Escobedo (chapter 14), William of Orange (chapter 17), and others. But this was a two-way street: some of the king's enemies also resorted to extrajudicial execution. The first known attempt to murder Philip occurred in London in 1556 when a

group of conspirators planned to stab him and Queen Mary to death at a tournament. In 1580, while the king resided in Badajoz, 'a young Portuguese woman asked to speak to the king. When the guards asked her what she wanted, she said she came to demand justice, and so they let her through'; but when she approached the king 'someone lifted her sleeve and she was found to be carrying a dagger. Later, closer examination revealed that she also had a knife'. Shortly afterwards, while in Lisbon, another 'young woman' brought Philip a written warning that his enemies were digging a mine to explode under the church where he normally worshipped: he at once sent courtiers to investigate, and they found it. In 1586 Philip 'gave an audience to a Portuguese woman, and it was subsequently found' that she 'had plotted to stab the king with a sharp dagger which she had concealed in her pilgrim's staff'.[36]

The king offered an easy target to assassins. The duke of Alba warned him more than once 'that it seemed a mistake for His Majesty to come' to the Escorial 'alone and without guards, since his movements in this lonely place were so predictable'; while the assassination of Escobedo reminded a courtier that in 1492 'in Barcelona, a man stabbed King Ferdinand, great-grandfather of Your Majesty' and he trembled with fear when he saw Philip 'in the courtyard' of the Escorial 'alone and entirely without everything that could and should generate fear and respect in the mind of someone with wicked intent'.[37] But Philip showed no fear. Although (as his critics asserted) he normally tried to keep a low profile, whenever he made a public progress he entered every town and city mounted on a horse, alone in the middle of large crowds; and a funeral oration in 1598 reminded mourners how the late king 'used to sleep safe and sound beneath windows that opened on to the street; how he used to walk in the fields alone and without guards; how he gave audiences unarmed and alone'.[38] The king sometimes joined his subjects in their devotions. On his progresses, he attended Mass every day in a local church or convent; and on Ash Wednesday in 1585, walking through the streets of Zaragoza, he met a religious procession coming the other way and at once moved aside into the crowd, fell to his knees bareheaded, and remained there in the midst of his subjects in silent respect until the Sacrament had passed. In 1592, on his last great Progress, Philip sat with his children among the students as they listened to public lectures at the university of Valladolid.

The king's two bodies

Philip, like all monarchs, had 'two bodies': public and private. Although he apparently appeared in public only once 'dressed in brocade with his sceptre in his hand' – on the day he was sworn king of Portugal (plate 37) – he often demonstrated his majesty in other ways. When he visited Córdoba Cathedral

in 1570, and found that the embalmed corpse of his ancestor Alfonso VIII (died 1214) lay in an open sarcophagus 'he removed his hat not only in respect but with reverence', and when he noticed that the corpse lacked the sword it used to hold, 'he handed over his own sword for the purpose, observing that it was inappropriate to give the king, his lord, a sword that did not belong to a king.' Three years later, on learning that in Peru his officials had begun to enter 'places with a standard and canopy [*palio*],' he wrote angrily: 'these are royal insignia and ceremonies, which only the king in person can use'. He ordered the viceroy 'to desist from now onwards, without any exception'. The king also insisted on the 'royal we' in all legislation 'intended to be permanent and observed by the kings who would succeed him', especially 'in such things as "we order and command", because "we" has always been used thus'.[39]

Normally, however, Philip preferred the 'dignity through understatement' advocated in Castiglione's influential *Book of the Courtier*: that is how he appears at the height of his power in the 'state portrait' of 1587, done when he was 60 (see plate 40). Although he had a new suit of clothes made every month, the design and the colour – black – remained the same. Sometimes the king 'dressed down' even further. In 1559, the English ambassador reported that Philip received him dressed 'very playnly', just 'cladde in a plaine blacke cloke with clothe cappe'; while one of the monks at the Escorial later noted that the king attended services 'looking just like a physician' (not a parallel the king would have relished, given his contempt for physicians), adding 'He did not even wear a sword.' In 1585, when Philip met his future son-in-law, the duke of Savoy, for the first time he arrived 'dressed in black without any pomp, except for his insignia of the Golden Fleece'; and although everyone else was refulgently dressed at the betrothal of his daughter, 'the king looked very ordinary, dressed in black cloth just like the citizens'.[40]

Even when attired 'very playnly', however, Philip had the power to intimidate the people he met. When she entered his presence, Teresa of Ávila reported that 'I felt completely confused when I started to speak to him, because he fixed his penetrating gaze on me and seemed to see deep into my soul . . . so that I lowered my eyes and told him what I wanted as quickly as possible.' Whenever Ambassador Leonardo Donà scheduled an audience, he spent hours beforehand 'reading and re-reading more than ten times' the letters and instructions that he had received in case Philip should ask him a question about them. In his funeral sermon, a court preacher noted that 'with a sideways glance he sent some men to their graves' and asked rhetorically 'how many great scholars, how many valiant captains, were unsettled, trembled, and mute in the presence of His Majesty?'[41]

In part this was a facade. The king often displayed a lack of self-confidence by obsessing about 'getting things right' (*acertar* was one of the commonest

terms in his vocabulary). He assured Inquisitor-General Quiroga that 'I want to get everything right, especially in matters where religion is concerned'; 'I want so much to get right the appointment of a president [of the council of Castile]'; and 'I shall not cease to think about everything, to make sure we get it right' – three examples taken from his correspondence with a single minister in a single year, 1576. The king's anxiety remained undiminished with the passage of time. In 1592 he thanked the Suprema for 'the great care you take in matters that are so important for the service of God, myself, and the authority of the Holy Office (because it is impossible to separate them), so that we can get things right'; while two years later he announced that 'I have been thinking for some days about the choice of Inquisitor-General, greatly desiring to get it right'.[42]

The failure of leadership

The king's anxiety to 'get it right', which compelled him to take all important decisions himself, created a system of government that resembled a panopticon, in which only the person at the centre can see everything. Although this arrangement has obvious appeal for that individual, it also creates obvious dangers. The primary task of a ruler, like the leader of any corporate organization, is to define clear objectives for their enterprise, develop a plan for achieving those objectives and then systematically monitor progress by adjusting the plan to circumstances whenever necessary. Their task is to ask the 'open questions' – what, when and why – and visualize how the enterprise should evolve over the next few years; they must also choose and coach subordinates to realize these goals, and delegate execution to them. Policy should never be confused with execution: leaders set goals and give directions, while managers implement them.

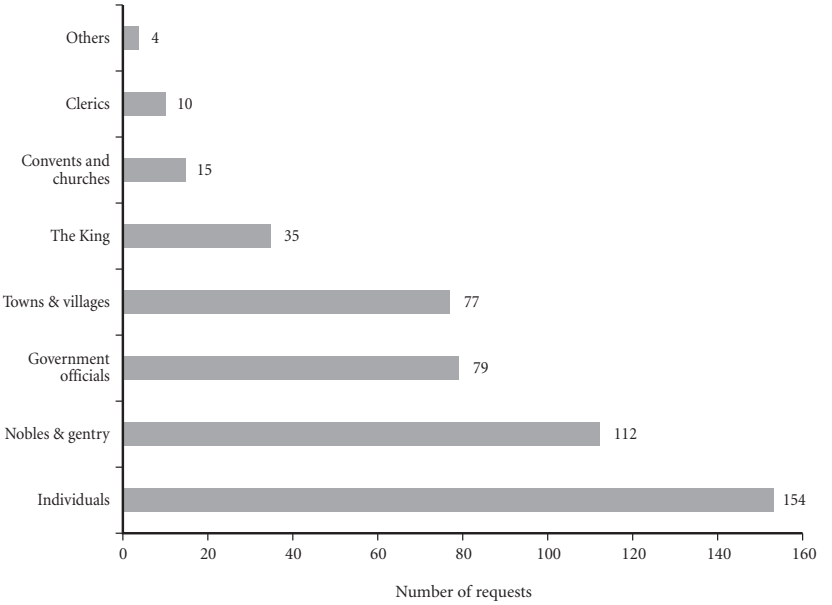
According to modern organizational theory, the least efficient and least successful corporate system is the 'crisis management' model, in which the leader attempts to do everything in a dictatorial and secretive manner, reduces employees at all levels to simple functionaries and then, overwhelmed by the burden of responsibility, restricts the goals of the organization to coping with each successive challenge and trying to avoid mistakes. This style of leadership, sometimes termed a 'zero defects mentality', was the one adopted by Philip. Thus before giving his final approval for any major action, he waited until he believed everything was perfect. In 1571, as the Venetian ambassador in Madrid waited anxiously for Spain's galleys to put to sea and join the fleet of the Holy League (chapter 11), he noted with irritated fascination the king's insistence that, 'Where naval warfare is concerned, every tiny detail takes up the longest time and prevents voyages, because not having oars or sails ready, or having insufficient quantities of ovens to bake biscuits, or the lack of just ten trees or masts, on many occasions holds up for months on end the

progress of the fleet.' Moreover, once the last oar, sail, oven and mast had been assembled, the king expected everything to happen like clockwork.[43]

This assumption was of course wholly unrealistic, given the limitations imposed by sixteenth-century technology and communications – but three factors blinded Philip to this critical defect. First, the king maintained the largest and best information service in Europe. A Netherlands envoy at court in 1566 warned his master back in Brussels: 'As Your Lordship knows, nothing happens there that is not immediately known here'; while eight years later an astute Italian ambassador deemed that the information at the king's disposal 'was such that there is nothing he does not know'.[44] Philip maintained permanent embassies in Rome, Venice, France, Genoa, Vienna, the Swiss Cantons and Savoy (also in Lisbon until 1580 and in London until 1584) as well as temporary missions elsewhere when occasion required; and whereas the ambassadors and ministers of most other European states normally sent one dispatch each month to their principals, Philip expected at least one dispatch each week – and sometimes more. In 1557, when he learned that a French army might attempt to relieve St Quentin, he ordered his commander at the siege to 'send me news by sending three or four messengers here, flying at top speed', and 'to this end, to keep post horses ready night and day'. Six years later, he informed his envoy at the council of Trent that 'there should be nothing, great or small, that is done or even contemplated in the council without you knowing all about it'. In 1588, during the Armada campaign, the king instructed his agents to provide a constant stream of news 'because now is the time to advise me of everything minute by minute'.[45]

Philip's ministers obliged. The king informed the duke of Alba during the invasion of Portugal in 1580 that 'I want you to let me know every day what is going on', and the duke obliged by sending two, three and even four letters a day; while his ambassadors and their spies penetrated and reported to him almost every secret in Europe. Thus in the 1560s, his officials in either London or Paris managed to obtain a map of the French settlements in Florida (which greatly assisted Philip's subsequent campaign to destroy them: chapter 7), while in the 1570s his ambassador in England 'paid 90 ducats to a person whom he sent on the ship on which Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed to America', and this unknown agent provided a treasure trove of information that helped Philip to thwart all attempts to discover the Northwest Passage.[46] In the 1580s the chief papal cipher clerk, the English ambassador in Paris and the comptroller of Queen Elizabeth's household (to name just the most prominent) all accepted Spanish bribes in return for valuable intelligence.

The efficiency of Philip's archivists in storing and classifying all this information constituted the second factor that sustained their master's mistaken conviction that he had an unlimited capacity to 'get it right'. The king created



14. Requests for copies of documents received by the archive of Simancas, 1548–99. In its first half century, the royal archive at Simancas received petitions for copies of one or more of its documents from 154 commoners, 112 nobles, 79 royal officials, 77 communities – and 35 from the king himself. Over one-third of the requests concerned documents generated by the council of Castile, while another fifth involved America. Almost half the requests came in the decade 1583–93.

and maintained several repositories: one in Barcelona for papers relating to the crown of Aragon; one in Naples for the muniments of the viceroyalty; one in the church of St James in Rome for papal briefs and bulls in his favour; and another in the fortress of Simancas for the papers of Castile and the central government. These were all 'working archives': between 1583 and 1593 the royal archivist at Simancas received almost 300 requests for copies of items in his collection, 35 of them from Philip himself – one of them a request for a document that proved that the crown had the right to nominate all deans in the kingdom of Granada. His archivist found a bull of 1493 that proved the point, and Philip smugly sent a copy to his ambassador in Rome.[47]

The final element that reinforced Philip's dangerous belief in his omniscience was the superb courier service at his disposal. The contract made by his father with the Taxis (or Tassis) family created chains of postal stations that linked Spain with Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, and every week scores of official messages passed safely along those chains. This network could be expanded whenever the need arose. Thus in 1567 the duke of Alba established a new postal chain, with two horses at each relay station, from Milan to Brussels

during his march to the Netherlands along what would later be called the Spanish Road, providing an alternative link with Spain whenever war rendered passage through France unsafe. As Giovanni Ugolini has observed, a letter could travel faster than anything else in the early modern world.[48] In 1566, when rebellion broke out in the Netherlands, individual couriers managed to convey messages from Brussels to the king in eleven, ten and, in one case, just nine days (an average speed of almost a hundred miles on horseback each day). Five years later, news of the victory of Lepanto covered over 2,000 miles in three weeks (again an average speed of almost a hundred miles a day); and the following year a galley carrying letters from Philip's fleet in Messina reached Barcelona – almost a thousand miles away – in only eight days.

The superior quality of Philip's information network frequently placed foreign ambassadors at the court of Spain at a disadvantage because Philip knew about developments before they did. On 15 October 1569, for example, Philip summoned Ambassador Fourquevaux of France to an audience and announced 'with a smile on his face' that his master's army had won a major victory over the Protestants at Moncontour, near Poitiers: a special messenger from his agent in Lyons had just arrived with the news. Confirmation of the victory came on the 21st with an express courier sent by the Spanish ambassador in France, but Fourquevaux did not hear about it from his own government for some days.[49] The king even managed to embarrass the ambassadors of the republic of Venice, whose information-gathering service was the envy of Europe. On 6 June 1571 a royal messenger from Rome brought news that the representatives of Spain, Venice and the Papacy had just concluded a league dedicated to the defeat of the Ottoman Turks eighteen days earlier; a papal courier arrived with confirmation on the 10th; but the Venetian ambassador, Leonardo Donà, received word from his own government only on the 28th. Later that year, although Donà was the first ambassador to receive a full account of the victory of Lepanto, when he arrived to share the news with the king he discovered that Philip had got word of it half an hour before.

Of course, the system did not always function that well. As Philip grumbled on one occasion, 'couriers either fly or sleep'. For example, of thirty-two letters from Madrid received by the Spanish ambassador in Paris during the year 1578, the fastest took only seven days; half of the total took between ten and fourteen days; and one took 49 days – a spread of between one and seven weeks. Unfortunately for Philip, no correlation existed between the urgency of a message and the speed of its arrival. In 1558, news of Charles V's death at Yuste on 21 September reached Philip in Brussels only on 1 December, while news of his wife Mary's death in London on 17 November did not reach him until 7 December. The king's decision to launch a surprise attack on Algiers in March 1566 was totally impracticable by the time his letter detailing the plan reached

the commander of his Mediterranean fleet, who was to play a key role, because the courier carrying the letter took two months to find the fleet. Likewise, the letter containing Philip's decision in July 1573 to switch from a policy of 'hard war' against the Dutch to one of conciliation miscarried because it took six weeks to reach the Netherlands. During the Iconoclastic Fury of 1566, the governor of the outlying province of Friesland, trying to secure help from the central government in Brussels, found that 'messengers on foot go faster'; while the chronic insecurity of the roads in the south of France sometimes compelled the Spanish ambassador in Paris to entrust dispatches to ordinary travellers on foot because they were less likely to be stopped and searched. The information and command system of the Spanish Monarchy had literally slowed to a walk.[50]

All statesmen resemble the captain of a riverboat: they can maintain steerage way only so long as their ship moves faster than the current. Philip's insistence on acquiring ever more data, feeding his illusion that this enabled – entitled – him to micromanage both policy and operations, paradoxically slowed down his ship of state and thus diminished his control. The king seemed aware of this problem earlier in his reign: he either briefed his principal lieutenants in person or at least entrusted his instructions to a minister capable of explaining his intentions in detail; and he sometimes delegated the final decision on critical operational issues to those whom he tasked with implementing them. Thus in 1557, during the siege of St Quentin, he wrote to his field commander, 'These matters cannot be decided here in a timely fashion, and because opportunities and events change by the hour' he conceded that 'you can put into effect whatever you see to be most appropriate and necessary for the success of this venture'. A decade later, he provided the duke of Alba with extremely detailed instructions on the policies to follow in the Netherlands, but then added the vital concession: 'I delegate all these matters to you, as the person who will be handling the enterprise and will have a better understanding of the obstacles or advantages that may prevail.' And in 1574 he granted Alba's successor, Don Luis de Requesens, similar latitude: 'This is what seems best to me but you, holding responsibility for these things, will do what you see to be most fitting for my service, and for the advancement of what lies in your hands.'[51]

In 1585, Mateo Vázquez advised a colleague that in decision-making one should do 'what used to be said to ambassadors', namely (and here he shamelessly imitated the king's style, employing the 'vos' form): 'You who are on the spot and hold the matter in your hands, will see and do what you understand to be most appropriate' – but the key phrase was 'used to'. Philip now drafted the crucial documents that explained policy to his subordinates in Madrid or the Escorial and then sent them by courier to those tasked with execution. 'Waste no time in complaints and questions,' he commanded, but instead 'Believe me, as one who has complete information on the present state of affairs in all

areas.'[52] This was ridiculous. Even if the king had possessed 'complete information on the present state of affairs in all areas', it would have been of little use because by the time his instructions reached their destination 'the present state of affairs' would have changed.

Philip never seems to have recognized these limitations, even during crises that expanded dramatically the number of urgent decisions required; and yet, in the words of an eminent contemporary strategic analyst:

> There is only so much that any human can absorb, digest and act upon in a given period of time. The greater the stress, the more individuals will ignore or misrepresent data, mistake and misconstrue information, and the greater will be the prospects for confusion, disorientation and surprise.

In short, 'More information from more sources, made available more quickly than ever before, equals system overload.' In the sixteenth as in the twenty-first century, 'Processing and transmission technologies far outstrip our ability to assimilate, sort and distribute information.'[53] Even if, as Don Juan de Silva speculated irreverently in 1589, 'His Majesty's brain must be the biggest in the world', events would show that it was still too small to micromanage an empire on which the sun never set.

PART V

THE KING VANQUISHED

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The 'Enterprise of England', 1585–1588

Spain under attack

Soon after his election as pope in April 1585, Sixtus V mentioned to the Spanish ambassador in Rome his zeal to commission 'some outstanding enterprise' for the Catholic Church, such as the conquest of England. The ambassador dutifully informed his master, but Philip angrily scribbled on the back of the letter, 'doesn't [the reconquest of] the Low Countries seem "outstanding" to them? Do they never think of how much it costs? The English idea lacks substance.'[1]

For a while, Sixtus obligingly shifted his attention elsewhere, but in August 1585 he again called on Philip to invade England. Once more Philip rejected the idea, albeit slightly less firmly. After emphasizing the cost and the long duration of the war in the Netherlands – 'entirely to avoid concessions over religion' and 'to maintain obedience there to God and the Holy See' – the king urged his ambassador to impress upon the pope the strategic dilemma that faced him.

> Let His Holiness judge whether I can undertake new enterprises, with this one [the Dutch war] in its current state . . . because one cannot deal effectively with more than one thing at a time; and let him consider whether reducing the pressure there [in the Netherlands] for anything else would be right, or a service to Our Lord . . . because the war is fought against heretics, which is what the pope wants. He should not think me idle as long as it continues.

Nevertheless, Philip conceded, 'If God is pleased to end that war, as (with His favour) one may hope, then there would be a way to satisfy the pope's holy zeal in some other area.'[2]

The news that Sir Francis Drake and his English expeditionary force had sacked Galicia (chapter 15) transformed the king's position: in the words of the

Imperial ambassador in Madrid, 'With this act the English have removed their mask'. Although initially Philip could do nothing – 'you must realize that the event was so unexpected that we can provide you with no help from here', he apologized to his officials in Galicia – the question was no longer whether he would counter-attack but when and how that counter-attack would take place. Philip commissioned his principal adviser on foreign affairs Don Juan de Zúñiga to prepare a thorough review of Spain's security priorities in the light of Drake's attack.[3]

Zúñiga's response represented Spanish strategic planning at its best. He first identified four major enemies – the Turks, the French, the Dutch and the English – and then reasoned that the Ottoman sultan, previously Spain's foremost antagonist, had committed so many resources to a struggle with Persia that Philip need only maintain a defensive posture in the Mediterranean; while the French, also once a major threat, now seemed so thoroughly mired in their own civil disputes that although it might be necessary to intervene at some stage to prolong them, the cost to Spain would probably not be high. This left the Dutch and the English. The former had been a thorn in Philip's flesh since the rebellion of 1572, because every Spanish success had been counterbalanced by a reverse; but although costly and humiliating, at least the problem remained confined to the Low Countries. The English menace was quite different. It had arisen recently and it threatened the entire Hispanic world, because Elizabeth had provided support to the Dutch and to the Portuguese Pretender, Don Antonio, as well as to Drake. Zúñiga argued that since England had now openly broken with Spain, 'to fight a purely defensive war is to incur a huge and permanent expense, because we have to defend the Indies, Spain and the convoys travelling between them'. He therefore asserted that an amphibious attack in overwhelming strength on Elizabeth's realms represented not only the most effective form of defence but the cheapest. He also argued that although the immediate diversion of resources to the Enterprise of England (as the venture was called) might temporarily halt the reconquest of the Netherlands and increase the vulnerability of Spanish America, these risks must be taken because English aggression threatened the entire Spanish Monarchy.[4]

Events soon vindicated Zúñiga's analysis. English troops paid by Elizabeth arrived in the Netherlands and her Favourite, the earl of Leicester, became governor-general of the rebellious provinces; meanwhile Drake continued his destructive progress through the Canaries and the Cape Verde Islands to the Caribbean, where he sacked Santo Domingo. In Madrid, Cardinal Granvelle fretted that 'the queen of England makes war on us so boldly and dishonestly, and that we cannot get our own back', while in Lisbon the marquis of Santa Cruz composed a *Discourse* that reviewed various ways to guard against the possibility of further attacks by Drake.[5] By contrast Archbishop Don Rodrigo

de Castro of Seville, who had worked with the king to re-Catholicize England in the 1550s, roundly condemned such craven and pusillanimous responses. What was the point, he enquired, of concentrating on Drake, a fine sailor with a powerful fleet? Surely the best way to end the English menace would be to attack England while its leading admiral was absent from home waters. 'If we are going to undertake a campaign against England,' he thundered, 'there will never be a better time.' The king agreed, scribbling on the dorse of Castro's letter 'The decision has already been taken.'[6]

It had indeed: on 24 October 1585, scarcely two weeks after Drake's forces landed in Galicia, Philip informed the pope that he would, after all, accept the invitation to undertake the conquest of England. The king sounded only two notes of caution. First, 'although His Holiness and His Majesty agree and are of the same mind about this enterprise, the lack of time (since putting the venture into effect requires extensive preparations) excludes the possibility of doing it in 1586, and so it will have to be delayed until 1587'. Second, because the total cost of the venture might exceed three million ducats, at a time when the war in the Netherlands already stretched Spain's finances to the limit, the king emphasized that although he was 'happy to contribute what he can, it cannot be more than a third – or at the most a half – of the cost. The rest will have to come from [Rome].'[7] Once Philip received reassurance on this score, in December 1585 he invited his nephew Alexander Farnese, prince and later duke of Parma, fresh from his triumphant reconquest of most of Flanders and Brabant, to devise a suitable strategy for invasion.

The 'masterplan'

It was one thing to decide that the Tudor state must be eliminated and quite another to achieve it. The king knew from his history lessons as a boy, as well as from his experience as Mary Tudor's consort, all about successful seaborne invasions of England. Some consisted of a combined operation by a fleet strong enough to defeat the opposing English navy while shepherding across the Channel an army sufficient to accomplish the conquest, just as William of Normandy had done in 1066. Others involved mounting a surprise assault, as Henry VII (Elizabeth's grandfather) had done in 1485, likewise with spectacular success. Yet other invaders had assembled an army in secret near the Channel while launching a diversionary assault elsewhere to draw off most of England's defenders, leaving the mainland relatively open to invasion by the main force. That all three possible strategies received consideration in 1586–8 reflects great credit on the vision and competence of Philip and his 'national security advisers'; that the king eventually tried to undertake all three at once does not.

Confusion commenced in February 1586, when Santa Cruz sent an eloquent paper arguing that the best way to defend the Iberian world would be an amphibious attack on England, which he offered to command. Philip immediately instructed the marquis to prepare and send 'a paper showing the way in which you believe this could be effected, should circumstances permit'.[8] The following month Santa Cruz sent a detailed discussion on logistics, entitled 'The fleet and army that it seems would be necessary to assemble for the conquest of England'. It prudently omitted both the precise strategy and the exact target envisaged, because 'the business is such that it is absolutely impossible to deal with or discuss it in writing', but the immense quantity and nature of the munitions specified – 510 ships, carrying 55,000 infantry and 1,600 cavalry, with all their supporting equipment, munitions and artillery – made his intentions clear enough. He aimed to emulate William the Conqueror and invade in overwhelming strength.

Meanwhile, in Brussels, Parma completed and dispatched his own detailed plan for invading England, as requested by the king the previous year. The 28-page assessment began by regretting the lack of secrecy surrounding the king's intentions, asserting that even ordinary soldiers and civilians in the Netherlands now openly discussed the Enterprise of England. Nevertheless, he believed that three basic precautions might still ensure success. Philip must have sole charge 'without placing any reliance on either the English Catholics, or the assistance of other allies'; he must also ensure that the French could not interfere, either by sending assistance to Elizabeth or by intervening in the Netherlands; and he must command enough troops and resources to defend the Netherlands from attack after the assault force had left. Parma offered to lead 30,000 infantry and 500 cavalry drawn from the Army of Flanders across the Channel aboard a flotilla of seagoing barges in a surprise attack on England. He felt sure that the invasion could be undertaken with a fair chance of success, provided his precise intentions remained a secret, 'given the number of troops we have at hand here and the ease with which we can concentrate and embark them in the barges, and considering that we can ascertain, at any moment, the forces which Elizabeth has and can be expected to have, and that the crossing only takes 10 to 12 hours without a following wind (and 8 hours with one)'. 'The most suitable, close and accessible point of disembarkation,' he concluded, 'is the coast between Dover and Margate', which would permit a rapid march on London. Only two paragraphs of the letter addressed the possibility of naval support from Spain, and even then only in the context of 'the worst possible scenario': that somehow details of the plan leaked, forfeiting the element of surprise and allowing Elizabeth to mobilize her forces to prevent a landing. In that case, Parma suggested, perhaps Santa Cruz and his fleet could 'create a diversion which will draw the English fleet away from the Channel'. This

corresponded to the third alternative strategy for invading England: a naval decoy to facilitate an attack by a relatively unprotected invasion army.[9]

Parma entrusted his assessment to a special messenger who only arrived at court in late June. By then, the Spanish capital was in turmoil. Mateo Vázquez complained to the president of the council of Castile, responsible for law and order, that

> the people of Madrid are talking very freely about the damage done by the Englishman Francis Drake, using brazen and careless words, implying that we failed to take appropriate steps to stop him. This raises the suspicion that someone is trying to unsettle people, instead of stressing the great prudence and wisdom with which His Majesty has acted and is acting to do everything possible.

The president replied suavely (and revealingly) that 'although there are always some wicked people and unquiet spirits everywhere, in this case I do not believe that those who talk about this do so because they are wicked'. Rather 'everyone can see how much England and the Englishman Francis Drake affect public affairs here', and so naturally people talked about it. He therefore suggested that Philip should create a special committee to discuss (and be seen to discuss) 'all matters of state and war that involve the English'.[10] But 'open government' was not the king's style. Instead, he passed Parma's assessment to Zúñiga.

After due deliberation, Zúñiga advised the king to embrace a more ambitious version of Parma's strategy. He should concentrate a fleet of 120 galleons, galleasses, galleys, merchantmen and pinnaces, together with an army of 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry in Lisbon, and launch them against either Waterford in Ireland or Milford Haven in Wales. At the same time, Philip should send reinforcements to the Army of Flanders, ostensibly to tie down the Dutch and English forces in Holland but really to cross the Channel in small boats in preparation for a surprise march on London while Elizabeth's forces tried to destroy the distant bridgehead established by the Armada. Given that Spain would gain no advantage from the direct annexation of England ('because of the cost of defending it'), Zúñiga recommended that the newly conquered realm should be bestowed upon a friendly Catholic ruler. He suggested Mary Stuart, after she had married a dependable Catholic prince such as Parma.[11]

These suggestions formed the basis of the comprehensive invasion strategy, henceforth called (for security reasons) 'the masterplan'. In July 1586, Philip had sent it to both Parma in Brussels and to Santa Cruz in Lisbon, and although no such document has so far come to light (if indeed the plan was ever committed to paper) its contents can be deduced from subsequent correspondence. Santa Cruz would lead an Armada from Lisbon in the summer of 1587 – one year later – carrying all available troops together with the heavy equipment

(above all, a powerful siege train) needed for a successful attack on London. He would sail first to Ireland and secure a beachhead to distract Elizabeth's naval forces and neutralize their potential for resistance; then, after some two months, he would suddenly leave Ireland and make a dash for the Channel. At that point, and not before, Parma would embark the main invasion force of 30,000 veterans on a flotilla of small ships secretly assembled in the ports of Flanders, and cross to Margate on the Kent coast shielded by the Armada, which would maintain local command of the Narrow Seas. Parma's men, reinforced by the soldiers and the siege train aboard the fleet, would then advance on London and seize it – preferably with Elizabeth and her ministers still there.

One wonders whether Philip realized the enormous risks inherent in the masterplan. Santa Cruz's initial proposal contained much merit: the 1588 campaign proved that, once they got an Armada to sea, the Spaniards could move 60,000 tons of shipping from one end of the Channel to the other, despite repeated English assaults. Likewise, the successful landing at Kinsale in 1601 showed that an amphibious force from Spain could capture and hold a beachhead in southern Ireland. Parma's counter-proposal of a surprise landing in Kent also had much to recommend it: time and again, his troops had shown their mettle under his leadership, and Elizabeth's army, largely untrained and taken by surprise, would have found it difficult if not impossible to repel the Army of Flanders once it got ashore. The failure of the Enterprise of England ultimately arose from the decision to unite the fleet from Spain with the army from the Netherlands as the essential prelude to launching the invasion.

Why did he make this crucial error? Philip had participated in two victorious campaigns at the beginning of his reign (chapter 3) and in the early 1580s he had approved both the daring transfer of a large army and its equipment from Setubal to Cascais, a sea journey of 125 miles, and the dispatch of two amphibious forces to capture islands over 1,000 miles from the Iberian Peninsula (chapter 15). He also possessed direct experience of the route his invasion forces would follow: in 1554 he had sailed from Corunna to Southampton, a journey he completed in just one week, and over the next three years he crossed the Channel three times. But once he returned to Spain, the king remained an armchair strategist: technical, tactical and operational considerations were a closed book to him. Moreover, since he refused to return to Lisbon and supervise the assembly of the fleet in person, as some of his advisers suggested, Santa Cruz had to wait at least a week to receive approval of each decision he referred to the king. Parma, for his part, had to wait at least four weeks. Furthermore, Philip declined to brief either of his commanders properly. Both received the masterplan by courier, so they could not insist that Philip explain precisely how the two large and totally independent forces, with operational

bases separated by over 600 miles of ocean, could attain the accuracy of time and place necessary to accomplish their junction; or how the vulnerable and lightly armed troop transports collected in Flanders could evade the Dutch and English warships stationed offshore expressly to intercept and destroy them. Finally, since both Zúñiga and Granvelle, the only ministers in Madrid who possessed the authority and the knowledge to raise objections, died in the autumn of 1586, no one insisted that Philip must devise a 'Plan B'.

Instead the king signed a stream of commands mobilizing the resources of his Monarchy to put the masterplan into effect. Officials in all ports must embargo any merchant ship deemed suitable to transport troops and munitions and send them to Lisbon; captains must raise troops in Spain to serve on the Armada; the viceroys of Naples and Sicily must send troops along the Spanish Road to reinforce Parma as well as supplies, ships and more soldiers to join Santa Cruz.

The Armada takes shape

The enormous cost of the Enterprise of England forced the king to economize elsewhere. In 1586, he rejected a proposal from the council of the Indies to improve the defences of the Caribbean in the wake of Drake's depredations. 'No one regrets the damage and no one desires a remedy more than I do, if only we had a way to execute it as we wish,' he informed the council, 'but your plan presents a lot of problems, and the biggest one is the lack of money with which to pay for it.' He likewise vetoed a proposal to build a fortress at Mombasa in East Africa, and a call from the settlers of the Philippines to invade China: the reason given in each case was the need to concentrate all resources on taking down the Tudor state.[12]

The king also deployed other means to weaken and isolate Elizabeth. He prohibited all trade from England to Spain and Portugal – English goods arriving even on neutral shipping would now be regarded as contraband – and he encouraged several plots hatched by groups of English Catholics to murder Elizabeth and replace her with Mary Stuart. He promised to send assistance from both Spain and the Netherlands to the plotters led by Anthony Babington 'with the greatest possible speed as soon as he knew that the venture had succeeded', confident that 'God would be pleased to permit what they plan, since the time has perhaps arrived for Him to advance His cause'.[13] But Elizabeth already knew all about Babington's plot and, as soon as she had sufficient evidence, she had the participants arrested, tortured and executed. Mary also went on trial for treason, and she died on the scaffold in February 1587.

Philip's involvement in Babington's plot infuriated Elizabeth, and she ordered Drake to return to the Iberian peninsula and do as much damage as he

could to prevent or at least delay the various parts of the Armada from joining together. In April 1587, a powerful English fleet entered the harbour of Cádiz, where it captured or destroyed over twenty vessels as well as food supplies and stores accumulated for the Armada. Given that sixteenth-century Europe enjoyed few food surpluses, it proved almost impossible to obtain large supplies at short notice, and Philip found it hard to replace the provisions destroyed. Worse still, after he had 'singed the king of Spain's beard' (as the English put it), Drake spent a month interdicting all sea traffic between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic; then he left for the Azores, proclaiming his intention of intercepting the returning treasure fleets from America and India. To avert this calamity Philip ordered Santa Cruz to head for the Azores to protect the fleets, which carried treasure and merchandise worth 16 million ducats, and escort them back to the peninsula in safety. Although the marquis succeeded, he returned to Lisbon only on 28 September 1587.

So much stress caused Philip's health to collapse. In May 1587, one of the ministers trying to coordinate Armada logistics complained that 'a lot of time is being wasted in consultations, and His Majesty is slow to respond; so we are losing time that cannot be recovered'; while a month later, one of the king's valets lamented that 'His Majesty's eyes are still running, his feet tender, his hand weak – and the world is waiting'.[14] The king's insistence on supervising every decision himself meant that his indisposition left a gap at the centre of power that no one could fill; and when he did resume control in September, he abandoned the masterplan and signed detailed instructions ordering both Santa Cruz and Parma to follow another totally – fatally – different strategy.

Philip now commanded the marquis 'to sail in the name of God straight to the English Channel and go along it until you have anchored off Margate head, having first warned the duke of Parma of your approach'. Then came a crucial ambiguity: 'The said duke, according to the orders he has received, on seeing the passage thus made safe by the Armada either being off the said headland or else cruising in the mouth of the Thames (if time allows), will immediately send across the army he has prepared in small boats, of which (for transit alone) he has plenty.' Until Parma and his men had made their crossing, the Armada 'should do nothing except make safe the passage, and defeat any enemy ships that might come out to prevent this'.[15] This left several critical questions unanswered. Above all, would the Armada approach the ports of Flanders to cover the embarkation of Parma's army or were the invasion barges expected to meet the fleet in open waters? If the former, how would the deep-draught ships of the Armada negotiate the shallows and sandbanks that fringed the Flemish coast; if the latter, how could a fleet cruising offshore protect the exposed barges from the waiting Dutch or English blockade ships?

The parallel set of instructions sent to the duke of Parma also evaded these vital questions. 'I have decided', the king told his nephew, that the marquis of Santa Cruz 'will sail in the name of God straight to the English Channel and go along it until he has anchored off Margate head'. The king promised Parma that the fleet would send advance warning of its approach and, he continued, 'you will be so well prepared that, when you see the Narrow Seas thus secured, with the Armada arriving off the said headland [Margate] . . . you will immediately send the whole army over in the boats you have prepared'. The king once again promised that, until the army was safely across, the Armada would concentrate solely on maintaining a clear passage, and he commanded Parma not to stir from the Flemish coast until the fleet arrived. But on how Parma would cross the forty miles that separated Dunkirk from Margate, the king wrote not a word. It was, to say the least, an unfortunate oversight.[16]

Nevertheless, now that his mind was made up, the king would tolerate no further delays, objections or even queries. Once again, he sent his detailed and inflexible instructions to both Lisbon and Brussels by courier, rather than with a personal messenger empowered to brief his theatre commanders on their role, answer their questions or provide feedback on the state of their readiness and morale. Instead he told Parma to stop complaining:

> I cannot refrain from reminding you that, apart from the initial idea of this enterprise and the selection of yourself to command it (which were my decisions), everything else connected with your end of the plan, including the resources prepared, were according to your own instructions of which you alone were the author. Moreover, for its preparation and execution, I have given you in great abundance everything you have asked me for.

Parma must put the plan into execution without further question or delay.[17] Santa Cruz received the same treatment as soon as he brought his storm-battered fleet back to Lisbon. He must stop complaining and set sail for Flanders: 'There is no more time to waste in requests and replies: just get on with the job and see if you cannot advance your departure by a few days.' As the days slipped by, the king lamented that 'so much time has been lost already that every further hour of delay causes me more grief than you can imagine. And so I charge and command you most strictly to leave before the end of the month.'[18] Letters of exhortation – wheedling and hectoring by turns – left the king's desk for Lisbon almost daily.

The Venetian ambassador in Madrid, who obtained a copy of one of Santa Cruz's measured refutations of these unrealistic tirades, speculated on why the king would refuse to believe his most experienced admiral. He came up with three reasons, all linked to Philip's temperament and style of government. First,

it was 'difficult for him to change plans, once he has decided on something'. Second, Philip's supreme confidence 'in his good fortune' led him to assume that God would reward his efforts if only he performed his own part to the full. Finally, the king's knowledge of international affairs led him to see operations in each theatre as part of a wider context, which increased his anxiety to act before he lost his diplomatic advantage.[19]

Although Philip never saw this analysis, he would surely have agreed with it – but he would have added a fourth reason for urging haste: the cost of delay. Each day the Armada lay inactive cost 30,000 ducats for the fleet and a further 15,000 ducats for Parma's army. Funds for even the basic tasks of government ran so low that Philip began to demand weekly statements of the amount of money in his treasury and personally determined which obligations he could meet and which must wait (see plate 41). He now realized that 'I need to close the door to everything except raising money', and he drummed into his councillors that 'finding money is so important that all of us must concentrate only on that and on nothing else, because whatever victories we may win, without money I do not know what fruit they will bear (unless God performs a miracle)'.[20]

The constant delays and the extraordinary inconsistency of Philip's planning process nevertheless brought one important advantage: it confused and frustrated not only his subordinates but also his enemies. At different times, the king gave serious consideration to a landing in Scotland, a surprise attack on Ireland or the Isle of Wight, a sudden solo assault by Parma's army on the coast of Kent – as well as an amphibious assault from Lisbon on Algiers or Larache instead of on England. The ambassadors and spies at the court of Spain detected each proposal and counter-proposal, and duly reported it to their principals, creating a cacophony of background 'noise' that disguised the king's real intentions. Few could accept that the most powerful monarch in Christendom could be so irresolute; still less did they imagine that after so much apparent vacillation he would adopt the most obvious of all strategies, the one that everyone had been talking about for months, and choose for his target the most obvious landing zone – the exact spot where the Romans, the Saxons and others had landed before.

Philip scored another remarkable success in maintaining Elizabeth's diplomatic isolation. The keystone of this policy was the paralysis of France, where his agents increased their subsidies to the duke of Guise, who in return agreed to engineer a general rebellion by the Catholic League the moment he heard that the Armada had left Lisbon. The Catholics of Paris began to take over the city in May 1588, and when King Henry III deployed his Swiss Guards to preserve order the inhabitants of the capital erected barricades and forced him to flee. The 'Day of the Barricades' made Guise the master of Paris and shortly afterwards he became 'lieutenant-general of the kingdom'. The Imperial ambassador in Madrid observed with admiration:

> At the moment, the Catholic King [Philip] is safe: France cannot threaten him, and the Turks can do little; neither can the king of Scots, who is offended at Queen Elizabeth on account of the death of his mother [Mary Stuart] . . . At the same time, Spain can be confident that the Swiss cantons will not move against him; nor will they allow others to do so, since they are now his allies.

In short, he opined, no foreign power could now stop Philip executing the Enterprise of England.[21]

Nevertheless, new problems constantly arose, including the king's own ill health. Philip was now 60 and at Christmas 1587 he fell ill again and took to his bed. For four weeks, he lacked the strength to govern his empire – or his Armada. But the enforced idleness seems to have restored some of the king's legendary prudence, and he now took more rational steps to save both the Armada and the Enterprise for which it had been created. To ascertain the true state of the fleet in January 1588 he dispatched a special envoy to Lisbon, who reported a state of utter chaos: Santa Cruz was seriously ill and deeply depressed, trying to command from his sickbed a shambles of unseaworthy ships and rotting supplies and (more critical because less easily cured) dispirited and disillusioned men. Obviously, Santa Cruz must go.

'The largest fleet since the creation of the world'

The king now took a decision that has been much criticized in retrospect but which made excellent sense at the time. What the Armada needed, if it were to sail at all, was not another fighting admiral but someone with the determination and the administrative skills to turn the chaos at Lisbon into a coherent fighting force. Such a man was Don Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, seventh duke of Medina Sidonia.

The duke's qualifications were impeccable. He had amply proved his administrative talents both in governing his own vast estates and in supervising the dispatch of the huge fleets sailing from Andalusia to America; and he had recently overseen with great efficiency the outfitting and dispatch of the ships and supplies assembled for the Armada in Andalusia. Although he lacked combat experience, the duke had raised and led an army during the Portuguese campaign of 1580, and commanded the relief force whose expeditious arrival had saved the town of Cádiz from being sacked during Drake's 'beard-singeing' exploit in 1587. His rapid response on that occasion earned widespread praise. The Venetian ambassador in Madrid considered that the duke had been the only man who kept his head in the crisis, while Secretary of State Gabriel de Zayas told a colleague 'if my opinion counted for anything, I would make [Medina Sidonia] president of the council of the Indies and member of the council of

State'.[22] Furthermore the duke knew the strategic aims of the Armada, having spent some weeks at court in autumn 1587 discussing with ministers the conduct of the impending war with England. Finally, and equally important, he was the head of one of Spain's foremost aristocratic families: none of the senior officers already serving in the Armada (several of whom had proposed themselves to Philip as suitable successors to Santa Cruz) could feel any resentment or injustice in serving under the seventh duke of Medina Sidonia.

The duke was at his castle at Sanlúcar when he opened an unexpected and unwelcome letter signed by the king on 11 February announcing that, since Santa Cruz was now too ill to lead the Armada, he must leave for Lisbon at once and take charge. Given the current state of the Armada – and few knew better than the duke how chaotic that state was – Medina Sidonia did everything he could to be excused. Initially, he pleaded that ill health, poverty and inexperience disqualified him from command, all of which the king dismissed as misplaced modesty; but he might have paid more attention had he seen a second letter written by the duke. This time, Medina 'drew to Your Majesty's attention many relevant reasons to show why I should not undertake this service – not to avoid hard work but because I see that the attack on such a large kingdom, with so many allies, requires far more forces than those that Your Majesty has assembled'. The duke had evidently reached the same conclusion as Parma and Santa Cruz before him – that the Enterprise of England, as currently conceived, was doomed to failure – but his cogent rationale never reached the king.[23]

Don Juan de Idiáquez and Don Cristóbal de Moura, in constant attendance on the king, handled the immense quantity of paperwork generated by the Enterprise of England. Nothing of consequence concerning the Armada bypassed them. When, in the course of their duties, they opened Medina Sidonia's frank letter, they were appalled. 'We did not dare to show his Majesty what you have just written,' they chided the duke, adding: 'Do not depress us with fears for the fate of the Armada, because in such a cause God will make sure it succeeds.' Here was another striking example of 'groupthink' at the Spanish court: those in charge of policy-making systematically belittled or rejected all discordant views – but this time the policy-makers also issued a palpable threat. Everyone knew (they reminded the duke) that he had been offered command of the Armada, so that to refuse it now would lead to accusations of ingratitude, selfishness, even cowardice. 'Remember that the reputation and esteem you currently enjoy for courage and wisdom would entirely be forfeited if what you wrote to us became generally known (although we shall keep it secret).'[24] Dismayed by this naked blackmail, Medina Sidonia asked for an audience with the king, but – as usual – Philip refused. The duke therefore tried to wrest substantial concessions from his master before reluctantly travelling to Lisbon,

where he found a cheery letter from the king reassuring him that 'If I were not needed so much here, to provide what is necessary for that [enterprise] and for many other things, I would be very pleased to join [the Armada] – and I would do so with great confidence that it would go very well for me.'[25]

The duke's reaction to this message has not survived, but a senior officer of the Armada, Martín de Bertendona, complained to Philip acidly: 'I really wish that Your Majesty could be present' at debates on how best to prepare for the Enterprise, 'because it would be very different to discuss them in Your Majesty's presence, where you could not fail to hear the truth, than to discuss them there [at court] where those who understand and those who do not can all give their opinions'. But, Bertendona concluded serenely (and undoubtedly sarcastically), 'since it is your Majesty who has decided everything, we must believe that it is God's will'.[26]

Nevertheless, under Medina Sidonia's efficient and courteous direction, aided by his willingness to seek the opinions of his more experienced subordinates, the fleet became seaworthy in less than two months. The ships already at Lisbon were repaired and several new ones added, while sick soldiers and sailors were nursed back to health, until by May 1588 the 104 ships and scarcely 10,000 troops that the duke had found at his arrival had risen to 130 vessels and almost 19,000 troops. Provisions and water were stowed according to a carefully planned turnover system, and each ship received a printed set of pilotage instructions and a standardized chart of the Channel approaches. On 28 May 1588 the duke led the great Armada down the Tagus to the open sea, ready to sail towards the 300 small ships and 30,000 veterans assembled by Parma in Flanders. At this point, Philip's forces far outnumbered those of his enemies.

The king and his minsters believed with absolute confidence that the Armada would solve all the strategic problems that faced the Monarchy. In a message to the Cortes of Castile in January 1588, written in his own hand, the king reminded the deputies that 'You all know that the Enterprise that I have undertaken for the service of God and advancement of our Holy Catholic Faith is also for the benefit of these kingdoms, because it is the same cause'. A month later, Idiáquez and Moura assured Medina Sidonia that 'now that all wars and ventures have been incorporated in this Enterprise', the invasion and conquest of England would solve all Spain's problems.[27]

This was rousing rhetoric, but once they moved from theory to practice, Philip and his advisers became vague. Above all, the instructions drawn up for Medina Sidonia on 1 April 1588 failed to make clear exactly how he could achieve his ambitious objectives. In part, the document repeated the orders issued to Santa Cruz the previous September, commanding the duke to lead his fleet directly to 'the appointed place' (almost certainly the anchorage of the

Downs), there to 'join hands' with Parma and his army; but just how to do this became lost in measures to curb the immorality of the fleet's sinful human cargo on such a saintly enterprise. The king specified all the necessary steps to ensure there was no blasphemy, drinking, gambling, feuding or sodomy aboard any of his ships, but he maintained a deafening silence on tactics: how, exactly, should the rendezvous be effected, and how, precisely, could the Armada secure local command of the sea while Parma and his vulnerable troop transports crossed the Channel? A few sentences did indeed touch on the second point, but their implications were more alarming than illuminating:

> There is little to say with regard to the mode of fighting and the handling of the Armada on the day of battle . . . [but] it must be borne in mind that the enemy's objective will be to fight at long distance, in consequence of his advantage in artillery, and the large number of artificial fires with which he will be furnished. The aim of our men, on the contrary, must be to bring him to close quarters and grapple with him, and you will have to be very careful to have this carried out.

To all of this, the king concluded, 'you will have to take such precautions as you consider necessary'. We may admire the king's tactical insight on this problem; but at the same time we must censure him – as no doubt his unfortunate commanders censured him privately – for his total failure to suggest a solution.[28]

For three months, such oversights remained academic because the Armada made such slow progress. Despite all the duke's preparations at Lisbon, provisions soon started to run out. Some of the food was putrid, and had probably been so from the start, while Medina Sidonia's success in increasing the size of the fleet meant that the rest was inadequate. The duke reluctantly cut the daily biscuit ration to one pound and reduced the issue of meat. The Armada's unexpectedly slow progress intensified the problem still further. On 20 June, since the fleet had only advanced as far as Cape Finisterre, the duke saw no alternative to putting in to Corunna to take on new supplies, but a sudden and violent tempest struck part of the fleet as it tried to enter the harbour, scattering some vessels as far afield as the Scilly Isles, off the tip of Cornwall.

This disaster broke Medina Sidonia's spirits. He composed two long and detailed appeals to the king that boldly restated the sweeping objections he had voiced at the time of his appointment to 'attacking such a large kingdom, with so many allies'. Despite his best efforts, he feared that 'the strength of the Armada remains inferior to that of the enemy', and yet the whole fate of the Monarchy 'depends on the success or failure of this campaign, to which Your Majesty has committed all his resources – ships, artillery, munitions'. If these assets were lost, they would take 'much time' to replace. Moreover, once he got

to sea, Medina Sidonia had found that 'the soldiers are not as well-trained as they should be' while 'I find few, indeed hardly any officials who understand and know how to carry out their duties. I write this from personal experience', he added, perhaps in a swipe at Idiáquez and Moura: 'so let no one deceive Your Majesty by saying something else.'[29]

The king learned of this setback in the midst of another bout of ill health brought on by pressure of work. 'I have to spend so much time on incoming papers,' he lamented, 'that I believe it is making me ill . . . Please tell some of the ministers in Madrid to moderate the number of papers they send.' Nonetheless he knew what he must do, telling Mateo Vázquez, 'It will require a lot of time and effort to find all the money that has already been spent, and will have to be spent, so that nothing will be left for me to do in what we have begun.' Ensuring the success of the Enterprise 'is so important that it now leaves me little time to do or think of anything else'.[30] He therefore gave Medina Sidonia's pessimistic assessment his immediate and undivided attention.

When the duke started to read the royal reply to his letters, the colour must have drained from his cheeks:

> Duke and cousin. I have received the letter written in your own hand, dated 24 June. From what I know of you, I believe you have brought all these matters to my attention solely because of your zeal to serve me and the desire to succeed in your command. The certainty that this is so prompts me to be franker with you than I should be with another . . .

After this terrifying start the rest of the missive, although firm, was considerate and mild in tone. Having restating the original reasons for the undertaking, Philip systematically demolished the duke's objections and doubts with his own perverse logic: 'If this were an unjust war, one could indeed take the tempest as a sign from Our Lord to cease offending Him; but being as just as it is, one cannot believe that He will disband it, but will rather grant it more favour than we could hope.' The English had no allies and their forces (despite the fears of his doubting commander) remained inferior to those of Spain. With a following wind the fleet could be in the Channel within a week, whereas if it remained in Corunna it represented a sitting target, liable either to be destroyed at anchor or blockaded in port while the English ravaged the unprotected Iberian coasts and captured the next treasure fleet. 'I have dedicated this enterprise to God,' concluded Philip, with a command that brooked no further dissent. 'Pull yourself together, then, and do your part.'[31]

On this occasion, the king's obstinacy was surely correct. Disbanding the fleet before it had gained its objective would achieve nothing except to waste all his resources and tarnish Spain's reputation. Moreover, the English fleet might

indeed easily descend on Corunna, just as it had done the previous year on Cádiz, and wreak havoc as the fleet lay helplessly at anchor. So far, therefore, so good; but unfortunately for his plans, Philip also seized the opportunity offered by the delay to resume micromanagement of the campaign. He had received a copy of a letter to Parma written by Medina Sidonia just after he left Lisbon, reporting that 'I assembled all the pilots and nautical experts aboard the fleet who are familiar with the coast of England and asked them to decide in which port there we could all shelter' while he waited for news that Parma had his forces ready. Events would reveal the wisdom of this 'Plan B', but Philip forbade it. 'The main point [of the plan] is to go on until you join hands with the duke my nephew,' he chided Medina Sidonia, 'and proceed to the agreed location and make safe the duke's transit.'[32] The Armada must not halt in any port on its way to pick up Parma's waiting troops. The central weakness of the king's operational strategy thus remained intact.

At least this verbal spanking restored Medina Sidonia's confidence. On 21 July 1588 he led the Armada to sea once more, and on the 30th, with the English coast in sight, he ordered the 130 ships under his command to deploy in a half-moon battle order that measured three miles from one tip to the other. Spain's enemies now ruefully recognized that they faced 'the largest fleet that has ever been in these seas since the creation of the world' and 'the greatest and strongest combination, to my understanding, that ever was gathered in Christendom'. Meanwhile, Philip concentrated on prayer: according to the friars of the Escorial, he and the royal family knelt for three hours each in relays before the Holy Sacrament to ensure the success of the Enterprise. After all the crises and 'tests' sent by God, the king felt calm and confident that 'nothing on my part remains to be done', and he told Idiáquez: 'Things hang in the balance: not just these affairs [of northern Europe] but of all areas.'[33]

For a time, it seemed as if 'the balance' had tipped in his favour. Repeated attempts by Elizabeth's navy to break the Armada's formation failed, and on 6 August 1588 it dropped anchor off Calais, just twenty-five miles from Parma's forces at Dunkirk and within sight of the designated landing area at the Downs. It remained there for thirty-six hours, and Medina Sidonia might justifiably have felt that he had indeed 'done his part'. Unfortunately for him, for the men aboard the Armada and for Spain, thirty-six hours were not long enough.

Both Medina Sidonia and Philip seem to have expected that the Armada would maintain reliable communications with Parma after it had put to sea – an assumption that betrays a fatal lack of familiarity with the realities of naval warfare (one cannot imagine Santa Cruz making the same elementary mistake). It never seems to have occurred to either the duke or his master that messengers from the fleet had either to run the gauntlet of hostile ships lurking in the Channel or else to make for the French coast and hope to find a relay of horses

ready to convey them overland to Flanders. It was foolish to assume that they would arrive – let alone return with an answer – much before the fleet reached 'the appointed place'. In the event, none of the couriers sent to advise Parma of Medina Sidonia's progress reached him in time to do much good. The envoy dispatched on 31 July, when the fleet was drawing level with Plymouth, could not make sail until the following morning, and only reached Parma's headquarters early on 6 August. Later that same day the messenger dispatched off the Isle of Wight on 4 August arrived. Yet by then the Armada was dropping anchor off Calais, just over the horizon – though Parma did not learn this for another day. So although Medina Sidonia repeatedly expressed regret at his slow progress, and sought to increase his speed exactly as Philip had exhorted him to do, from Parma's perspective he arrived much too soon.

Given this breakdown in communications, Parma could not possibly have embarked his men aboard his small ships by 6 August, ready to 'join hands' with Medina Sidonia, because he did not know until that day that the Armada had even entered the Channel, let alone that it had reached Calais. Nevertheless Parma had prepared a meticulous embarkation schedule, and on 2 August, on learning that the Armada had arrived off the Lizard, he placed his forces on alert; and on the 6th, on learning that the fleet's approach continued, all units began to move to the ports. Over the next thirty-six hours, almost 27,000 men managed to embark without mishap – no mean feat for any army in any age – but by then the Armada had, in the unkind words of a contemporary Dutch historian, 'vanished into smoke'.[34]

On the evening of 7 August, the English launched eight fireships against the Armada anchored off Calais. Most captains simply cut their cables and fled – only to find that the strong currents which prevail in the Narrow Seas made it impossible for them to regain their positions and re-anchor. At a stroke the Armada had been transformed from a cohesive and still formidable fighting force to a fragmented gaggle of panic-stricken ships. The next morning, English warships managed to break into the Armada's close order and inflict catastrophic damage on several vessels. The following day, Medina Sidonia gave the order for the fleet to sail back to Spain on what one of his officers grimly called 'the voyage of Magellan that we have begun' around Scotland and Ireland – a journey (for those who survived it) of some 3,000 miles.[35]

Counting the cost

The first certain news concerning the Armada's failure to 'join hands' with the Army of Flanders arrived at court on 31 August, and Philip immediately sought to regain control of the situation with his pen. He informed Medina Sidonia, wherever he might be, that 'the news of the defeat before Calais . . . worries me

more than you can imagine', and he ordered Idiáquez to prepare a detailed memorandum telling the duke what he should do if the Armada had taken refuge in Scotland or elsewhere (refit, and discuss ways of effecting the invasion the following year), or had started on the journey back to Spain (put some troops ashore in Ireland and create a bridgehead for operations the following year). On 15 September, he issued even more unrealistic orders: Medina Sidonia must land in Scotland, ally with the local Catholics and winter there. Philip had finally recognized the need for a 'Plan B'. This unusual willingness to contemplate alternative strategies reveals, perhaps more clearly than anything else, that the king's self-confidence had received a shattering blow. When he read the draft of a reply to Parma, expressing the hope 'that we may yet perform the service that we wanted to dedicate to God and to regain the reputation that is now in jeopardy', the king underlined the passage. 'Think whether it might be better to delete this', he told his secretary, 'because in what we do for God, and what God does for us, there is no gain or loss of reputation. It is better not to talk about it.'[36]

On 3 September a courier from France brought more detailed news concerning the Armada's defeat and northward flight. The disconsolate cipher clerks and ministers debated which of them should break the news to the king. The choice fell upon Mateo Vázquez, but even he broached the subject with great trepidation and indirectly, choosing to forward a tactless parallel drawn by a courtier: 'When we consider the case of King Louis IX of France, who was a saint and was engaged on a saintly enterprise [the Seventh Crusade in 1250], and yet saw his army die of plague, with himself defeated and captured, we certainly cannot fail to fear greatly for the outcome' of the Enterprise of England. Vázquez suggested that yet more prayers be said to stave off a similar disaster. This proved too much for the king: 'I hope that God has not permitted so much evil,' he scribbled angrily on the letter, 'because everything has been done for His service.'[37]

In October, after reading some painful accounts by Armada survivors, Philip wrote, 'I have seen all this, although I think it would have been better not to see it because it hurts so much'; and the following month, when he learned of further losses, he predicted:

> Very soon we shall find ourselves in such a state that we shall wish that we had never been born . . . And if God does not send us a miracle (which is what I hope from Him), I hope to die and go to Him before this happens – which is what I pray for, so as not to see so much misfortune and disgrace.[38]

In all, perhaps 15,000 men – almost half the soldiers and sailors who had embarked on the Armada – perished during the Enterprise of England, and at least one-third of the ships, together with their equipment and armament, never

returned to Spain. Philip lost almost all his experienced naval commanders; and the venture had absorbed 10 million ducats to no effect.

On top of these material losses, Philip had suffered a major moral setback. As early as June 1588, when storms scattered the fleet, the papal nuncio in Madrid wondered whether 'these impediments that the devil creates' might be a sign that 'God does not approve of the enterprise'; and in November he noted that the pointless loss of so many ships and men had 'disturbed everyone, since they can almost openly see the hand of God raised against us'.[39] Even the monks of El Escorial, normally Philip's greatest supporters, came to see the Armada campaign as his greatest failure. Fray Jerónimo de Sepúlveda considered it a misfortune 'worthy to be wept over for ever . . . because it lost us the respect and good reputation that we used to have among warlike people . . . The grief it caused in all of Spain was extraordinary: almost the entire country went into mourning . . . People talked of nothing else.' According to his colleague Fray José de Sigüenza, 'it was the greatest disaster to strike Spain in over six hundred years' because, quite apart from the destruction of human and material capital and the loss of reputation, the king's policies had plunged Spain into an open war with England as well as with the Dutch and their other allies that would last long after his death.[40]

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Philip at bay, 1589–1592

Soon after the fate of the Armada became known in Spain, 'after some prayer and much thought' the eminent Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira, one of the most vocal supporters of the Enterprise of England, composed a remarkable analysis of the disaster and sent it to one of the king's close advisers. Although Ribadeneira accepted 'the absolute necessity of continuing with the war and seeking the enemy, unless we want them to seek us and make war on us at home', he argued that the king must address some urgent broader issues:

> The judgements of God are most secret, so that we cannot know for certain the purpose of his Divine Majesty in the extraordinary fate he has decreed for the king's powerful fleet. Nevertheless, seeing that the cause was so much His, and was undertaken with such a holy intent, and was so much desired and assisted by the whole Catholic Church, the fact that He was not moved by the pious prayers and tears of so many and such great devotees makes us fearful that there are serious reasons why Our Lord has sent us this affliction.

'So,' Ribadeneira continued, 'it is both necessary and advisable to seek and consider the causes that may have moved God to punish us in this way' and allowed 'a group of damned souls like the English' to administer such a 'great scourge and punishment' on Spain in general and on Philip in particular. Foremost among these causes were 'the public sins and scandals, especially if committed by notable people who should be setting an example' and, since Philip 'could so easily emend and correct these excesses with a single example, if he fails to act in this matter Our Lord may well ask him to explain why'.[1] Philip lost no time in making an 'example' to remove 'public sins and scandals': he instructed his judges to indict Antonio Pérez for the murder of Juan de Escobedo.

The trial of Antonio Pérez

In 1582 Philip had sentenced the princess of Éboli to permanent house arrest in her palace at Pastrana, and he had authorized the collection of evidence against Pérez by two judges (chapter 15). As in all *visitas*, the judges proceeded in secret until, in June 1584, they presented Pérez with a list of forty-one separate charges covering his activities since 1571 and demanded immediate answers under oath. Thirty-nine of the charges required him to explain how he had acquired particular sums of money or specific articles, but the last two concerned his work as secretary of state. Pérez began his response by welcoming the chance to establish his innocence, after 'five years of not being heard', and then pointed out the irrelevance of allegations concerning events after his arrest, since he no longer transacted official business. He had a ready answer for all but the two charges of professional misconduct, which read:

> That the said Antonio Pérez did not maintain secrecy, as he had sworn to do, but instead revealed secrets in different ways to different people, writing letters that contained details of confidential business; and that when he decoded letters addressed to His Majesty, for personal motives he added, changed and removed items.

In his response to these charges, Pérez adopted the same strategy as Bartolomé Carranza a generation before (chapter 7): he denied everything and called upon the most eminent men in the kingdom to testify in his support, starting with the king.

> He calls as a witness in his defence His Majesty King Philip, Our Lord; Don Gaspar de Quiroga, cardinal of Toledo, primate of Spain, chancellor and Inquisitor General, member of His Majesty's council of State; and the Reverend Friar Diego de Chaves, His Majesty's confessor and a member of his council. He requests that they should be summoned and examined according to the law, within fifteen days.[2]

At this point, if not before, 'His Majesty King Philip, Our Lord' must have realized that in order to refute such serious allegations, Pérez would seek to incriminate him; and if he still missed the point, shortly afterwards a letter arrived from Antonio Enríquez, the leader of the assassins, explaining how

> Antonio Pérez had deceived him wickedly, telling me that Your Majesty had ordered us to kill Escobedo, which subsequently turned out to be totally untrue. Instead he wanted us to do it for some private end of his own. I would

> never have agreed to do it unless I was deceived into thinking that Your Majesty had ordered it.[3]

For the first time, someone explicitly had linked the king with the murder – and yet instead of acting on this detailed denunciation Philip signed a warrant that authorized an annual payment to Pérez of 500 ducats for 'the salary granted to him as secretary of state' and 400 more 'as a cost-of-living allowance, during His Majesty's pleasure'.[4] Philip's generosity to a disgraced minister now accused of thirty-nine charges of taking bribes, two of betraying state secrets and one of orchestrating a murder and blaming it on the king is breathtaking; but it seems that the king aimed to lull his ex-secretary into a false sense of security, because one month after signing the warrant, two magistrates arrived at Pérez's home and conveyed him ignominiously in handcuffs and shackles to the fortress of Turégano (Segovia). Philip now approved the judges' sentence on Pérez: two years in prison, ten years' exile from the court; the return of all the bribes specified in the charges; and a fine of 20,000 ducats.

This concluded the first act of the process to 'verify and refine the faults that were emerging about Pérez', but almost immediately the second act began. Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce (a member of the council of Castile and one of the 'visitors' appointed by the king) met Enríquez, who repeated under oath his detailed account of exactly when and how Pérez, claiming to obey the king's orders, had orchestrated the murder of Escobedo. The truth could not be concealed for much longer, and so both Pérez and Philip took steps to protect themselves. The ex-secretary, claiming that one of his captors 'had received orders from His Majesty to poison him', tried to escape from Turégano to Aragon; but he failed. This triggered various responses. Royal officials sold many of Pérez's belongings at public auction, arrested and imprisoned his wife and family (who had planned the escape), and seized his personal papers.[5] Suspecting that some significant papers had slipped through his hands, Philip authorized the president of the council of Castile to offer Pérez's wife, Doña Juana Coello, her freedom if she surrendered all messages written in the king's hand still in her possession. Doña Juana immediately saw the danger. 'Sir,' she asked the president, 'if these accursed papers contain my husband's alibi in the Escobedo affair – that His Majesty ordered Antonio Pérez to do what we now know – what shall we do without them, and without some certificate from His Majesty to protect us against our many enemies?' Fray Diego de Chaves, not only royal confessor but also her kinsman, stepped in and offered his personal assurance that as soon as she surrendered the documents the king would improve conditions both for her and for Antonio. After thinking about it for a few days, Doña Juana handed over 'two sealed caskets' filled with confidential papers.[6]

Philip kept his word and allowed Pérez to rejoin his family and to live once again in relative freedom in Madrid, and in September 1587 he even ordered that 'Antonio Pérez should be paid all his salary arrears since the end of 1584'. This evidence of continuing royal favour so infuriated Pedro de Escobedo, Juan's eldest son, that he took the law into his own hands and sent some 'men to capture or kill Diego Martínez [another assassin] and any other servants of Antonio Pérez who had killed his father'.[7] This time, in marked contrast to his inaction in 1578, Philip immediately ordered his judges to bring to justice those who 'in contempt of me and without fear of the law, treacherously killed Juan de Escobedo in this my city and court of Madrid'. He also authorized Vázquez de Arce to use 'the enquiries you have already made in this matter' – that is, the secret testimony taken in 1582 – to interrogate any and all suspects, and, 'if necessary to clarify matters, you may use the torture or torments allowed by law on any person or persons you choose'.[8]

On 30 August 1588, for the first time, Vázquez de Arce demanded that Pérez answer under oath detailed questions about his role in the murder of Escobedo. Yet again, the process ground to a halt, perhaps because Philip still hoped to avoid a public trial at which the full truth about his involvement would become public; but, if so, this hope evaporated on 2 September 1589, when Pedro de Escobedo formally accused Pérez of complicity in the murder of his father – a charge that made a public trial unavoidable.

The king now made what seems like a blatant attempt at entrapment. Chaves, who was with the king at the Escorial, sent Pérez an unsolicited letter of advice ('I have been thinking deeply about whether, in the name of charity, it would be acceptable to give advice to someone who did not ask me for it'). 'In order for you to be delivered from close confinement and all the pointless troubles you have suffered,' he wrote, 'it seems to me that there is no better path than to tell the truth about what happened concerning the murder they ask about, and about who ordered it' – but, the confessor continued, Pérez must say no more. The secretary should admit to his part in the murder 'without stating the causes that existed for ordering it: you must not enter into particulars about this'. Chaves concluded his remarkable letter by addressing a specific concern raised by Pérez: whether he should settle with Pedro de Escobedo out of court. Chaves approved, but only on condition that 'this must be done without involving His Majesty'. Perhaps imprisonment had dulled Pérez's acumen because, despite the obvious danger, he followed Chaves's advice. A few days later he signed a binding agreement to pay 20,000 ducats to Pedro de Escobedo, who in return would withdraw his accusation of murder, affirming that 'he pardoned everyone because it pleases God to end lawsuits and quarrels, and because some important people had intervened had asked him to do so.'[9] By accepting forgiveness from the plaintiff, the ex-secretary admitted his guilt in

the assassination of Juan de Escobedo, but he received no pardon from the king and his judges.

Pérez soon discovered his error. In December 1589 Philip ordered that his former secretary 'state the reasons for the death of Escobedo' – precisely what Chaves had instructed him *not* to do – and Vázquez de Arce announced:

> Having informed the King Our Lord that Antonio Pérez seems to have ordered the death of Juan de Escobedo with the blessing and knowledge of His Majesty, it seems necessary that this consent should feature in the legal defence of the said Antonio Pérez . . . [His Majesty] therefore wants to know from the said Antonio Pérez the said reasons together with the supporting evidence for them, because he was the one who knew the facts and communicated them to His Majesty.

Pérez's guards received orders 'not to let him speak or communicate with anyone, nor speak to him themselves, on pain of death'.[10]

Pérez clung to Chaves's advice and insisted for as long as he could that he must preserve 'the secrets of his profession' despite the king's insistence that he should divulge them but on 23 February 1590, after eight turns of the rack on his arms, he confirmed everything that Antonio Enríquez had said. Three months later, Vázquez de Arce sentenced him to be 'hanged, drawn and quartered, with confiscation of all his goods' for murder, 'for revealing secrets of the affairs and business of state entrusted to him, and for falsely deciphering the letters that he forwarded to His Majesty'.[11] He pronounced the sentence in vain. On 19 April 1590, realizing that without the 'accursed papers' that contained his alibi he was doomed, Pérez escaped from prison and crossed the frontier into Aragon, where Castilian judges had no jurisdiction.

Pérez's flight had serious repercussions for the princess of Éboli. Fearing that she too might escape, Philip sent orders to Pastrana to confine her to a single apartment and to place strong grilles on all the windows. Ana protested 'they are putting me in an Inquisition cell', and 'it is not possible that His Majesty would either wish or permit this' – but she erred: she remained in her 'Inquisition cell' at Pastrana until she died in 1592.[12]

Philip's dramatically different treatment of the two people arrested on the same night in 1579 perplexed contemporaries and continues to puzzle historians. Why did the king stop short of prosecuting Pérez and the six assassins who he knew for certain had 'treacherously killed Juan de Escobedo'? Chaves offered a revealing rationale for extrajudicial killing in his letter to persuade Pérez to admit his role in the death of Escobedo. 'As I understand the Law,' the confessor explained,

> A secular prince who holds the power of life over his subjects can take it away for a just reason through a formal trial, and he can also do so without trial if there are witnesses [to the crime] . . . If the prince should incur blame by proceeding irregularly, that is not true of the subject whom he orders to kill someone else who is also his subject, because we assume that the prince acted with just cause, in the same way that the Law presumes all actions of a sovereign prince are just.[13]

According to this rationale, if Philip gave his consent to the extrajudicial killing of Escobedo, he must have 'acted with just cause, in the same way that the Law presumes all actions of a sovereign prince are just' – provided the 'witnesses' had told him the truth.

The king evidently doubted that Pérez had told him the truth as early as 1580, when he set up the *visita*, and those doubts had deepened by 1581 when he drew up in his own hand a list of witnesses to be interrogated. And yet when the following year Vázquez de Arce informed Philip that he had concluded 'this business of the princess and Antonio Pérez', although Philip decreed civil death for the former, he forbade open condemnation of the latter (chapter 15). Perhaps Philip had decided to alternate rewards and punishments because (as Henar Pizarro Llorente pointed out in her perceptive biography of Cardinal Quiroga) 'other people close to Antonio Pérez knew about the plans to assassinate Escobedo', including the secretary's wife and 'the Two': Los Vélez and Quiroga.[14] They were not alone. The six assassins certainly heard about the king's involvement from Pérez's majordomo; almost certainly Chaves heard about it from the king himself during confession; and probably the princess of Éboli heard about it from Pérez, who seems to have shared all his secrets with her. Moreover, since all the major protagonists maintained considerable households, their servants might have overheard indiscretions and gossiped about them. The expanding circle of those who knew the truth prevented the king from using the same 'power of life' against Pérez as he had used against Escobedo.

Perhaps Philip hoped that the death of his awkward prisoner in confinement would resolve his dilemma: such, after all, was the fate of many prisoners, and Pérez would then take the truth about Escobedo's murder to the grave. But if Philip harboured such hopes, he abandoned them in 1588 when he finally ordered Vázquez de Arce to start a regular trial. But why did he do so then? Although the king left no explanation, perhaps the fate of the Enterprise of England had led him to the same conclusion as Ribadeneira: that he ought to 'eradicate public sins and scandals, especially if committed by notable people'. Was it a coincidence that Vázquez began to interrogate Pérez about the

assassination in late August 1588, just as news arrived of the Armada's failure to 'join hands' with Parma's army waiting in Flanders? And might the decision to encourage Pérez to confess his guilt in September 1589 reflect the loss of reputation resulting from the king's failure to prevent the landing of English troops in both Spain and Portugal?

'We are in a state of open war'

Philip had done his best to protect the peninsula. When in November 1588 he received a consulta that urged him to create a new expeditionary force that would 'sail straight to England and find a way to conquer it', he

> rejoiced greatly to read all that these papers said, which corresponds perfectly with what one might expect from those who said it, and with the desire that has inclined me to this enterprise since the beginning, for the service of Our Lord, the defence of His cause and the benefit of these realms . . . I shall never fail to stand up for the cause of God and the well-being of these kingdoms.

Shortly before this Philip summoned delegates from the Cortes of Castile to the Escorial, and gave a short speech. 'What led me to undertake this campaign,' he reminded them, 'was the service of God, and the good and security of Christendom.' Now, the king continued, 'we are in a state of open war' and 'our enemies are well defended and we fear that they might come here to do some damage'. He concluded: 'This obliges us to make great and excessive expenditures, or risk terrible harm.' Philip sent the delegates back to Madrid with a memorial 'entirely written in His Majesty's hand' that repeated these details.[15] In December 1588, the Cortes received another personal message from the king stating that 'he would like to inform and tell them the exact amount required to achieve our objectives; but we do not know, precisely, what sum we would need'. Nevertheless, since the failed campaign had cost 10 million ducats, and 'since we need to supply what we lack, and undertake an offensive war', Philip feared that the cost could be no less.[16]

The king's decision to communicate with the Cortes 'orally and in his own handwriting (an extraordinary and unprecedented thing)', produced a favourable impression and they agreed to provide Felipe with taxes worth eight million ducats – soon known as the *Millones* – 'for the defence of the faith and of his realms'. The Cortes also believed that the best way to achieve these objectives was by invading England because, 'if we defeat this enemy it will end the war in the Netherlands, which has been and still is so expensive for Your Majesty and these kingdoms, because England provides them with the means to carry on'. Therefore, they hoped 'the army and navy that you send on this

campaign will aim to attack and conquer, and in achieving its goal will recover past losses and the reputation of our nation'.[17] But first Elizabeth managed to strike another blow.

In May 1589, Sir Francis Drake returned to Galicia at the head of a large Anglo-Dutch fleet. He put ashore an expeditionary force – something the Spanish Armada had failed to do – that first sacked Corunna and then anchored near the mouth of the Tagus while English soldiers marched on Lisbon. Although the troops soon turned back, their audacity infuriated the king, and on 23 June he appealed to the Cortes for more money, given 'how important it is for my service and God's to punish the boldness of the enemy'. That same day, however, Philip revealed how little he had learned from previous failures in command and control. Martín de Bertendona, Spain's senior surviving admiral, had come to court to advise his sovereign 'in case there is to be a campaign against England', but Philip characteristically replied: 'you can tell me all about it in writing, since I do not have time to hear about it in person'.[18]

Shortly afterwards, the strategic scene changed again with the assassination of the French king. In many ways Henry III had served Philip's purposes well. Although fundamentally hostile to Spain, Henry lacked the resources to do much harm: his Protestant and his Catholic subjects despised and distrusted him in almost equal measure, and the royal treasury lay empty. Since Henry, like his brothers, sired no legitimate male children, upon his murder in August many of his French subjects and all of his Protestant neighbours immediately recognized his nearest male relative, the Huguenot leader Henry of Bourbon, as King Henry IV. Philip could not accept this. 'My principal aim is to secure the well-being of the Faith in France and to see that Catholicism survives and heresy is excluded,' he reminded the duke of Parma. 'And so, if in order to ensure this exclusion and to aid the Catholics so that they prevail, you see that it is necessary for my troops to enter France openly', they must invade. Philip fully recognized the strategic consequences of this decision:

> The affairs of France create obligations that we cannot fail to fulfil because of their extreme importance; and since we must not undertake too many things at once, because of the risk that they will all fail (and because my treasury will not allow it), it seems that we must do something about the war in the Netherlands, reducing it to a defensive footing.[19]

Mateo Vázquez, at least, saw that these economies would not suffice. The winter of 1589–90 had been long and hard, followed by a bad harvest, and in February 1591 he received another self-pitying lament from his master complaining about 'melancholy, which is a very bad thing, although the current situation and what is happening in the world promotes it; and I cannot avoid it

entirely, because I am pained to see the state of Christendom today'. Mortally sick and perhaps for that reason more outspoken, Vázquez scolded Philip that he could not continue to ignore the fact 'that the population is declining, and in such a way that many reliable people who have come from various parts of the kingdom say that it is a marvel to meet anyone in the smaller villages, so that sowing and harvesting are rapidly coming to an end'. He therefore argued that Philip must cease spending the resources of Castile so prodigally on foreign wars, and instead find alternative sources of revenue. 'If God had intended Your Majesty to heal all the cripples who come to you to be cured, He would have given you the power to do so; and if He had wished to oblige Your Majesty to remedy all the troubles of the world, he would have given you the money and the resources to do so.' If the king persevered with the same expensive policies, Vázquez continued relentlessly, 'Everything may collapse at once for lack of money'. Philip addressed this passionate complaint with remarkable equanimity – although of course he rejected it. 'I know you are moved by the great zeal you have for my service to say what you did,' he gently chided his minister.

> But you must also understand that these are not matters that can be abandoned by a person who is as conscientious about his responsibilities as you know me to be, because they depress me and matter to me more than to anyone. Taken together, they involve far more problems than people think . . . Moreover, these issues involve religion, which must take precedence over everything.[20]

Philip did not dispute the material evidence of impending disaster; rather, his faith-based political vision led him to ignore it. Vázquez's prediction that 'everything may collapse at once' came true a few months later, when rebellions broke out in both Castile and Aragon.

Castile, Sicily and Aragon in revolt

The trouble began in March 1591 in Madrid when the Junta de Policía, recently created by the king 'to promote the benefit and growth of this city of Madrid and to ensure that it is clean, beautiful and safe', issued a decree that imposed a fine of three ducats on all craftsmen who 'move their offices, goods, equipment or anything else into the street, or come out of their shops to work there'. Three ducats was a substantial sum and, because 'there is no appeal to any court from this junta', a group of craftsmen sent a petition directly to the king asking him to suspend the decree. The king was at the Escorial, 'and so they could not speak with him', whereupon several thousand artisans marched through the

streets of the capital shouting 'mercy and justice'. One group 'raised a banner and marched to the beat of a drum' to the Alcázar. Only when Don Cristóbal de Moura emerged and 'said he would tell the king about it in due course' did the crowd disperse, allowing the magistrates to arrest and imprison the leading demonstrators. Four received two hundred lashes followed by four years rowing the king's galleys, while others received six years of exile.[21]

Not long after order returned to the streets of Madrid, protests against new taxes surfaced in Toledo, Seville and Ávila. Meanwhile in Sicily, where the failure of the harvest made the situation especially volatile, the nobles in the Parliament refused to consent to any further tax – but since they lacked the support of the clergy and the towns, after some negotiations and threats (which included moving a cavalry regiment to the outskirts of the capital) the leaders of the movement were isolated and arrested. The 'revolt' was over in a matter of weeks. By contrast the revolt that began in Aragon in May 1591 lasted almost a year, and its suppression required the king to deploy 14,000 troops and spend almost 1.5 million ducats.

The revolt fed upon two separate disputes. The first concerned the enmity between the Moriscos, most of them settled farmers, and the Old Christian sheep ranchers who lived in the Pyrenean foothills, known as Muntanyeses. Their periodic confrontations culminated in 1588 with the massacre of Moriscos in the county of Ribagorza, a strategic and substantial fief ruled by the duke of Villahermosa, committed by Muntanyeses reinforced by the charismatic Lupercio Latrás, the head of a bandit gang who had defied royal authority for almost two decades. Philip responded by sending troops into Ribagorza, both to protect the Moriscos and to punish their enemies. Latrás escaped but was soon arrested by officials of the crown of Castile. Although he claimed that as an Aragonese he was not subject to the laws of Castile, the king imprisoned him in Segovia castle and after a secret investigation had him executed there for treason.

The second conflict gathered momentum in 1589 when Philip sent the marquis of Almenara as his special representative to persuade the local elite of Aragon to accept a viceroy who was not born in the province, hoping that an official without local ties would govern more effectively. Many Aragonese saw the attempt to appoint a 'foreigner' as viceroy – together with the invasion of Ribagorza and the summary execution of Latrás – as part of a comprehensive royal attack on Aragon's *fueros* (local laws), and the kingdom's foremost aristocrat, the duke of Villahermosa, drew up a manifesto inviting his colleagues to form a league for the defence of the ancient constitution.[22]

Philip and his Aragonese vassals, equally confident of the justice of their cause, were thus already set on a collision course when in April 1590 Antonio Pérez crossed the border from Castile and arrived in Zaragoza, the kingdom's

capital. Since his father Gonzalo was Aragonese, the disgraced secretary knew that a legal process known as *manifestación* afforded him a measure of protection against the crown. An Aragonese subject who 'manifested' that he was the victim of arbitrary persecution by the state could demand a hearing in the court of the Justiciar of Aragon ('essentially an ombudsman', in the felicitous phrase of Teofilo Ruiz, who 'was the jealous defender of Aragonese liberties and privileges').[23] Pérez also knew that while the Justiciar considered each case, he guaranteed the safety of the defendant; and that defendants had the right to demand that their accusers surrender to the Justiciar any goods they had confiscated. Pérez therefore demanded both a hearing by the Justiciar, Juan de Lanuza, and the return of the 'two sealed caskets' of documents that his wife had delivered to fray Diego de Chaves, claiming that they would prove his innocence.

Philip ordered his lawyers to accuse Pérez before the Justiciar of the same charges for which he had been convicted in Castile, and he sent a copy of the principal documents that had led to that conviction; but Pérez responded by producing documents of his own that appeared to reveal his master's complicity in the death of Escobedo, and he sought to print them in a memorial drawn up in his defence. Since no printer in Zaragoza would take on the work, Pérez hired a team of scribes who made some thirty manuscript copies, which he distributed to 'many judges, knights and other people' throughout Spain and Italy.[24] Fearing that this might not suffice to convince the Justiciar of his innocence, Pérez attempted to flee across the border to Béarn, the Protestant stronghold of Philip's arch-enemy Henry of Bourbon. Although he failed, this move allowed the Inquisitors to accuse Pérez of heresy and to demand his removal from the Justiciar's prison to their own custody. Philip instructed Almenara to assist in the process, which took place on 24 May 1591.

Almost immediately, Zaragoza erupted in violence. Rioters ran through the streets 'with drawn swords shouting "Liberty" ' and demanding the return of Pérez to the Justiciar; a mob of 3,000 angry Aragonese surrounded the Inquisition's headquarters and threatened to burn it down; another mob injured Almenara so badly that he died of his wounds two weeks later.[25] According to an Aragonese loyalist in July 1591, the noble league formed by Villahermosa now 'raised the cry of "liberty" to further excite the general population' while 'those familiar with the history of the current and past rebellions in the Netherlands and Italy used their knowledge to avenge themselves for the injustices that they attributed to the king'. He concluded: 'I firmly believe – and I am not imagining this – that unless there is an immediate response with a firm hand and rapid punishment, this revolt will be like the Netherlands.' Another royalist soon echoed the same sentiments: the Aragonese 'are losing the respect due to God and His Majesty, and if His Majesty does not immediately intervene we will have another Dutch Revolt'.[26]

Other royalists warned that the revolt of Aragon would unleash opposition to Philip elsewhere. The duke of Gandía, the king's cousin, provided a particularly disturbing domino theory of what might happen 'if the troubles of Aragon continued':

> What security will we have that the Portuguese will remain peaceful, and what will happen in Italy when people see us here preoccupied and tangled up with wars at home? You already know what is happening in the Netherlands, France and England, and everyone knows that the king cannot afford to get involved in any more wars, since his resources are so exhausted and depleted by past and present ones.

The king's advisers in Madrid agreed: 'Prudent government is required to avoid all domestic disturbances,' they reminded him. 'This empire has expanded so much precisely because we have enjoyed peace at home and fought our wars far away.' Yet everyone seemed to overlook the issue that Philip regarded as most important: the rioters had failed 'to obey and respect the Holy Office'. He therefore saw the use of force as unavoidable.[27]

As it happened, Philip had overwhelming force at his disposal. He had begun to mobilize troops in Castile for an invasion of France, and he could easily divert them to suppress the troubles in Aragon as they marched towards the Pyrenees. In July 1591 he therefore informed his ministers that he had resolved to use force to pacify Aragon 'even if it means going there myself', because 'we have done the same for the sake of religion in the Netherlands, and more recently in France, which is not even mine; so you can see how much greater is my obligation to attend to my own dominion, especially in one that is so near'. He ordered the Justiciar of Aragon to send Pérez back to the Inquisition on or before 24 September 1591; but once again, when the officials of the Holy Office attempted to transfer the prisoner, crowds filled the streets and men 'with drawn swords ran among the rioters shouting "Long live Liberty" in very loud voices'. Thirty people perished in the violence, with many more wounded.[28]

Philip now sent a menacing letter to the cities of Aragon, reminding them that 'since the army I have raised to enter France for the service of God and the good of Christendom is now ready, I am obliged (albeit with regret) not to send it abroad but instead to use it to restore peace at home'. Meanwhile Justiciar Juan de Lanuza invoked a *fuero* from 1461: 'The Aragonese can and may take up arms against any hostile foreign forces that enter their kingdom, even if they act against their own king or crown prince if they should enter in that way.' Philip responded by reassuring his Aragonese subjects that 'my army will not enter to overthrow your laws, but will pause on its way to campaign in

France to support and facilitate the maintenance of justice by those born in the kingdom' – unaware that the previous day the Justiciar, having declared that the king had broken the *fueros*, had summoned its towns and cities to send troops to assemble at Zaragoza on 5 November, ready to fight.[29]

But Lanuza, too, acted in ignorance: Philip had already ordered 17,000 Castilian troops to move to the border with Aragon, and on 6 November they entered the kingdom and marched towards Zaragoza. Since only a few towns responded to the call to arms, Lanuza had just 2,000 men and foolishly, instead of using them to prepare Zaragoza to withstand a siege while he waited for reinforcements, he decided to meet the royal army in battle. As soon as his followers saw how heavily they were outnumbered, most fled. Pérez, who had remained in hiding in the capital since the September riots, now decided to make another attempt to escape to Béarn, and this time he succeeded – luckily for him, since Zaragoza surrendered without a struggle. A small band of rebels, including Lanuza and the duke of Villahermosa, took refuge in a nearby fortified town, but at the end of the month, reassured by the moderate behaviour of the royal army, they too surrendered. They miscalculated: Philip ordered the arrest of the Justiciar and his leading associates, and on 20 December one detachment of Castilian troops led Lanuza to the gallows in Zaragoza's Main Square, where he was beheaded, while another detachment escorted Villahermosa to prison in Castile. Philip also authorized the arrest of all those involved in the murder of Almenara and all those denounced for challenging the Inquisition's authority.

In Madrid a special 'Junta of Aragon', which included Inquisitors as well as members of the councils of Castile and Aragon, submitted a long list of crimes, suspected offenders and appropriate punishments. Philip rejected this comprehensive plan for vengeance and instead called for a policy of clemency that 'would calm the spirits of all those in the kingdom who are suspicious and nervous that my ministers and the inquisitors are going to prosecute them'.[30] Nevertheless, as earlier in the Netherlands and in Portugal, Philip's definition of 'clemency' was narrow: in January 1592 he outlawed as traitors almost 150 of his subjects (including Pérez), any clerics who had taken part in the riots, any lawyers who had advised resistance, and the captains of the troops who had joined Lanuza to oppose the royal army. Philip appointed Vázquez de Arce, Pérez's nemesis, to punish any offenders who had sought refuge in Castile; he sent special judges from Madrid to Zaragoza to try offenders there; he created a special tribunal to deal with the towns that had sent support to Lanuza; and he offered a reward for the capture of the 'principal leaders' who had fled, above all Pérez.

In March 1592 the count of Chinchón, who handled Aragonese affairs at court, informed his nephew Don Francisco de Bobadilla, commander of the

army of occupation, that the king 'says you would do him a great service in arranging by all means at your disposal to capture or kill Antonio Pérez. You may offer fourteen, sixteen and even twenty thousand ducats to anyone who brings him in alive; and up to eight thousand to anyone who brings you his head.'[31] Although Bobadilla was happy to pursue Pérez and a few other leaders, he urged Philip to be merciful to the rest, citing the obvious parallel: 'I do not need to cite examples from Greek and Roman history, but only the one that caused Your Majesty so much trouble: the Netherlands'. Even 'a great general like the duke of Alba, commanding a powerful army' had not managed to subdue 'the Dutch, who are by nature humble and simple people'. So, Bobadilla asked the king rhetorically, what would happen if he provoked the Aragonese, 'a people by nature haughty, angry and daring, who are accustomed to settling things by force of arms, which they use and carry as soon as they are strong enough to do so'. Don Francisco accompanied this outspoken letter with an even more forthright note to Chinchón: 'The Netherlands are in their current state because of hatred for the Tenth Penny' – the sales tax that Philip had forced Alba to impose against his better judgement (chapter 11) – 'and if we follow the same path in Aragon, without doubt we will immediately repeat here what has happened in the Netherlands'.[32]

The journey to Tarazona

Perhaps Don Francisco's analogy found its mark, because shortly afterwards Philip embraced the same 'path' he had followed in Granada and Portugal, and had intended to follow in the Netherlands: he resolved to make a personal visit to the pacified region. But as usual he wanted the punishment of those guilty of rebellion to take place before he arrived, and also as usual he insisted on micromanaging the process, especially in 'the matter of Antonio Pérez, because His Majesty is very sure that he will be surrendered alive, and so he wants to abort any current plans that just aim to kill him' – that is, the king would deal only with those who offered to deliver him alive.[33] Once again, the king miscalculated. It would have been relatively easy to murder Pérez (several people offered to oblige), but Philip's insistence on securing the person of his principal opponent allowed Pérez, just like William of Orange and Don Antonio before him, to slip away. The ex-secretary therefore survived to coordinate military attacks on Aragon from France and also to propagate in his numerous writings a devastating portrait of Philip as a fickle, mendacious, petty, vindictive and rather obtuse tyrant.

Meanwhile the prisons of Zaragoza became so full that both the Inquisition and the royal judges had to release on parole 'the less guilty' in order to concentrate on interrogating the rest, often under torture, so that (in the king's words)

'we will get things right and find out the truth'. The king took a keen personal interest in some interrogations. Thus after his agents captured Miguel Donlope, a rebel leader who had fled to Béarn and then rashly re-entered the kingdom, Philip wrote: 'I was very pleased to learn of his capture' and he instructed the Inquisitors 'to keep him under very close guard and make sure to get out of him everything that he knows'. Two months later, after studying the transcript of Donlope's interrogation, the king wanted to know more: 'Write to tell the Inquisitors to squeeze Miguel Donlope until he reveals the people to whom he sent [from Béarn] the boxes of books mentioned in the 17th charge against him; and with whom he corresponded, because in the 20th charge it says that he received some letters meant for others.' A little later, Philip monitored equally closely the case of Rodrigo de Mur, leader of a faction in Ribagorza. 'This was a very good and very important arrest' he announced when he learned of his capture by the Inquisitors of Toledo; and when, shortly afterwards, Mur appealed to the Suprema for better treatment, Philip resolved 'It would be safest to prevent him from writing anything.'[34]

The king also took a personal interest in testimony that incriminated the duke of Villahermosa, whom he had imprisoned in Burgos castle. As he moved towards Aragon, however, Philip decided to stay in Burgos, and since protocol forbade him to stay under the same roof as a disgraced grandee, he had Villahermosa moved to the royal fortress at Miranda de Ebro – where, after just a few days, 'he died after a brief illness'. Villahermosa's brother, the count of Luna, noted pointedly that this happened 'before his relatives even knew the duke was sick'. Although he stopped short of accusing Philip of judicial murder, Luna noted that 'at the very least' his brother's death 'was convenient'. Royal apologists did nothing to allay such suspicions, affirming that the duke was guilty of treason and that 'it is obvious that if someone is rightly condemned to death, there is no reason to conceal it'.[35] This was the same argument that Chaves had deployed three years before – 'A secular prince who holds the power of life over his subjects can take it away for a just reason through a formal trial, and he can also do so without trial if there are witnesses [to the crime]' – and by the summer of 1592 many witnesses had incriminated Villahermosa. Although Philip asserted that the duke had died of natural causes, and no contrary evidence has surfaced to contradict him, twenty years earlier Philip had likewise insisted that Montigny died of natural causes after a 'brief illness' even though, beneath the Franciscan habit in which he was hastily buried, the baron's neck bore the marks of the garrotte applied on the king's express orders (chapter 11)

Between them, the Inquisition and the royal judges took the lives of at least forty Aragonese rebels and imposed corporal punishment and banishment on sixty others. Many of them suffered the further ignominy of having their houses

razed and their goods confiscated. But when the Suprema asked permission to try eleven more suspects *in absentia*, the king refused. 'Although all eleven of those mentioned in this memorial are certainly guilty, I think we should delay the verdict' until 'we know how things are in that kingdom, and what would work best to end the troubles, which I hope will be a great service to Our Lord'.[36]

After a leisurely progress through Old Castile and Navarre, Philip now made his sixth visit to the kingdom of Aragon (see plate 42). In November 1592, for the last time in his life, 'he descended from his coach and mounted a horse that was entirely white, richly caparisoned, under a rich canopy' to make his ceremonial entry into Tarazona, where the Cortes of the kingdom awaited him. This majestic gesture astonished the royal entourage:

> We all rejoiced to see such an entry, because it was unusual to see the king mount a horse at the advanced age of sixty-six or so. After all the illnesses and setbacks that he had suffered, it seemed to us a notable achievement, but his great and magnanimous heart managed to endure all these toils and tribulations in order to win over and pacify the people who had so recently been so hostile.[37]

By the time the king arrived, the Cortes of Aragon had been in session for some weeks and had already made some of the concessions he desired: agreeing that legislation required only majority approval, not unanimity; incorporating the county of Ribagorza into the royal domain; and amending the *fueros* to make it more difficult for a person suspected of treason to shelter behind them, as Pérez had done. Now they also recognized the royal right to appoint a 'foreigner' as viceroy and swore obedience to the prince as their next ruler. The king, for his part, issued a general pardon and refused yet another demand from the Suprema to condemn still others who had challenged its authority. He informed the Inquisitors:

> To avoid further delay, I decided to publish in Zaragoza a pardon on behalf of the Holy Office and to state that no one else will be summoned. And that is what I did. With this, with the punishments thus far, and with the good laws that remain in that kingdom, I trust in Our Lord that its people have been taught a lesson and will now take good care to obey and respect the Holy Office.

The king maintained that upholding the authority of the Inquisitors formed 'the principal reason that led me to take the revolt so seriously'. Since he had now done so, it was time to move on.[38] Nevertheless, the royal army remained in the kingdom for another year to implement a number of further measures intended to secure loyalty. It conducted a census of Moriscos, confiscating

from them 8,000 firearms and numerous lesser weapons; it protected the engineers who built a network of fortresses, castles and watchtowers in the Pyrenees to prevent any stealth attack by Pérez's supporters from France; and it oversaw the construction of a vast citadel to protect the headquarters of the Inquisition.

As he made his way back from Tarazona to Madrid, despite the exceptional cold ('I would venture to say,' wrote Jehan Lhermite, 'that neither the Netherlands nor Germany has experienced worse cold than we felt there, with continual hail and snow'), the king had good reason to feel satisfied. His prompt and firm reaction to the revolt of Aragon ended the dangerous wave of rebellions in Spain: not only would there be no more uprisings during his reign, there would be no more for a generation. Moreover, when Catalonia rebelled in 1640 and appealed to its neighbour for aid, Aragon remained loyal.

According to Lhermite's meticulous calculation, the king and his entourage had travelled 500 miles over the previous eight months and on 30 December they returned safely to the capital. Philip immediately went 'to the monastery they call *Las Descalzas* to see and greet his sister the Empress and her daughter the Infanta Doña Margarita' and then he spent the rest of the winter as usual in the Alcázar.[39] Despite these indications of normality, the journey to Tarazona represented a watershed in Philip's reign. It left the king drained. There was no question of him riding into Madrid on 'a horse that was entirely white, richly caparisoned, under a rich canopy': instead, he entered his capital slumped in the back of his coach with the blinds drawn. Never again would he take personal command of a crisis, and he would read few incoming papers with intense and sustained scrutiny. As he neared his sixty-seventh birthday, the king's grip on power began to fail.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Towards the tomb – and beyond, 1593–1603

A hardening of the arteries

In 1590 the marquis of Velada, a prominent courtier, criticized the life of the ageing Philip II as little more than 'hunting, buildings and gardening' – a view implicitly endorsed by the Jeronimite monks at the Escorial, the king's 'ordinary residence from Easter to All Saints Day': they filled their chronicles with descriptions of how and when he hunted, reviewed architectural plans and enjoyed his gardens. Beyond the convent, however, criticisms of the king and his policies had a sharper edge. According to the royal chronicler Antonio de Herrera, the revolts in Castile, Sicily and Aragon in 1591

> gave rise to speculations full of doubt and fear. The good regretted the toil and the reverses; the others, through hatred of the current state of affairs, which they considered miserable, rejoiced and blamed the king who amid all the dangers was wasting his time on activities and matters of little importance, affirming that if he were gone everything would improve.

In 1595 a saying began to circulate: 'If the king does not die, the kingdom will die', and by then the king's failing health fuelled speculation that he might die soon.[1]

Monsieur de Longlée, the long-serving French resident at the court of Spain, had reported in July 1586 that Philip 'looks older and more pensive' because 'his gout causes him pain', and indeed the king lay in bed incapacitated for several weeks that summer. The following year, Philip informed his daughter Catalina that 'I have not been able to walk for five or six days and was confined to bed because I twisted my knee. What gives me most pain is my hand, which has prevented me from writing or doing anything else with it for several days. That is why I have not written to you. And my eyes are not too

good either.'[2] In March 1588, Philip again apologized to Catalina for 'not writing to you' because 'my gout started earlier than usual – I have now had it for two months' – and 'I still walk with a stick'. In addition, 'they have drawn blood once, and also purged me, so I have been very tired and very thirsty. All this has left me very weak, and I take a long time to do everything.' Longlée noticed that 'His Majesty is thinner', and portraits of the king at this time show him with tired eyes and hollow cheeks – the latter probably reflecting the loss of his remaining teeth, often by extraction, 'and removing one of them hurt a lot' (see plate 43).[3]

'Hurt a lot': like his contemporaries, Philip had no painkillers or antibiotics, and it was primarily to reduce the constant pain in his limbs from 1595 that he resorted to a 'special chair for the gout', with movable positions from almost vertical to horizontal. The chair 'allowed him to rest and to take the weight off his limbs whenever he left his sickbed'. On many days Philip now 'stayed seated in the chair from the time he arose in the morning until he went to bed at night', wearing light clothes over his nightgown, and he 'lay there as if he were in his own bed, since the seat was wide and deep' (see plate 44).[4]

The king's mind, as well as his body, began to deteriorate, and he now complained not just that he lacked time to take decisions (as he had always done) but also that he lacked time even to think about taking them. When Mateo Vázquez made the admirable suggestion that the president of the council of Castile should hold office for only three years, just like other senior officials, the king replied wearily: 'There is much food for thought here, and I will think about it – although there are so many other things to think about now that I don't know how I stay sane. God help us.' Yet still Philip refused to relinquish power. As Nuncio Camillo Caetani put it in 1594: 'although the king is old and constantly sick', nevertheless 'he wants to be involved in all business matters' and, as he had always done, he 'consults few people before he embarks on prolonged, difficult and dangerous affairs'.[5]

The dispatches of Caetani, the only diplomat who still received personal audiences, reveal that the king went through a pattern of 'ups and downs' during his last years. Thus in April 1596, the nuncio reported that on some days Philip 'transacts the normal amount of reading and writing' and even 'wrote a letter to His Holiness in his own hand'; while in June he watched the bullfights staged in the square outside his palace, where 'the whole city saw him on a stage, walking without assistance or a cane, sitting and getting up, wearing his sword and ordinary clothes for five hours'. At an audience the following month, by contrast, Caetani found 'His Majesty much more downcast and weak than usual, indeed more than I have ever seen him'. His face 'was emaciated and his eyes lacked their usual sparkle', and he 'showed great weakness in speaking and moving'.[6]

Letting go

This cyclical pattern is the key to understanding the last years of the reign. Intervals of relative health enabled Philip to retain ultimate control of the policies pursued by his ministers, while awareness that illness might incapacitate him at any moment led to some important administrative innovations to ensure that the central government functioned smoothly even without the king's direct participation. In Madrid, a committee of experienced ministers called the Junta Grande (the 'Big Committee') summarized and evaluated the consultas sent by each central council before sending the dossier to the Junta de Noche of senior ministers who (as before) accompanied the king. The juntas added their recommendations before each item arrived on Philip's desk. This procedure reduced a multi-page consulta to a single line and twenty consultas to a single page. Jerónimo Gassol, who became secretary of the Junta de Noche after the death of his brother-in-law, Mateo Vázquez, in 1591, handled both the recommendations of the Junta de Noche and the documents marked 'to be placed in the king's hands' (chapter 4). Normally the king dictated his rescript to Gassol, and then added his initials, but he could and did still demand more information or advice before reaching some decisions. 'Tonight or tomorrow, communicate this to the three ministers who were in the Junta, who will know more about this,' Philip instructed Gassol on one consulta, 'so that before I get up Don Cristóbal [de Moura] can tell me what they advise so that, once I know that, I can make up my mind.'[7]

In September 1593, Philip decided to double the size of the Junta de Noche (henceforth known as the Junta de Gobierno), and he added his nephew Albert, who had served as viceroy of Portugal since the king's departure a decade before. Albert now returned to Madrid where he both gave audiences and received ambassadors in the king's name; but he did not preside over the Junta, an honour the king reserved for Prince Philip, albeit always accompanied by his governor, the marquis of Velada. Philip instructed the Junta de Gobierno that in matters 'in which you already know more or less what I want – investigating faults, supervising the execution of decisions already taken, distributing modest rewards and promotions, and making lesser appointments' – it should 'send me the resolution directly, either written in the margins or on the dorse of the consultas, so that I can initial them'; but he retained greater control over 'more serious matters, such as the administration of the treasury, raising loans' and defence. In these cases, 'send me your recommendation on a separate paper so that I can write or dictate the appropriate decision. After that, as soon as I return the paper communicating what I decide on each matter, you can put the rescript and resolution on each consulta and send them back to me; and I will get the prince my son to initial

them' before Gassol returned each consulta to the relevant council for implementation.[8]

Philip later refined this system. After the death of Fray Diego de Chaves in 1592 the king's ministers begged him to 'name a confessor because many matters of conscience arise and we do not know who to consult about them': eventually Moura's nominee, Fray Diego de Yepes, became the royal confessor and to him Philip henceforth sent specific proposals to see if they could be implemented 'in good conscience'. In addition, the king increasingly communicated his orders through Moura. At first he did so clandestinely. Thus in October 1594, he instructed Moura to 'tell Gassol to write a rescript on this consulta that corresponds to your paper of advice, making it seem that it is my opinion and not yours, and then let him send it to me to initial'.[9]

These administrative changes achieved three goals. First, although Philip retained the ultimate decision in 'more serious matters' for much of the time, when he fell ill Moura deputized for him, having become the royal Favourite in all but name. Moreover, whatever the king's state of health, the Junta de Gobierno transacted routine government business in an orderly fashion – and, should he die suddenly, it would oversee the orderly transfer of power to his heir. Above all, the junta served as a 'collective tutor' to the prince: just like his father at the same age, by presiding over the daily meetings of senior ministers the heir to the throne learned how to rule the dominions that would soon be his.

In contrast to these sensible domestic changes, Philip persevered with the same disastrous foreign policies as before. In October 1596 he ordered his admiral, Don Martín de Padilla, to lead the Atlantic fleet painstakingly created in the wake of the Armada in an attack on Ireland. When Padilla pointed out the risks of setting forth so late in the year Philip deployed the same sort of spiritual blackmail that he had used in the past against Alba, Santa Cruz and Medina Sidonia.

> You must leave immediately in the name of God and do what I have ordered in the voyage and in the whole campaign. Although I realize that the season is advanced, and that this poses risks, in this we have to trust in God (who has done so much for us). To stop what we have begun now would be to show weakness in His service.[10]

Padilla complied but, just as he had predicted, storms struck his fleet soon after it set sail, causing the loss of many ships and some 2,000 men.

Although Philip failed to harm Elizabeth in 1596, the queen again managed to inflict severe damage on him. For two weeks in July, an Anglo-Dutch force occupied Cádiz, and then burned it – taking with them numerous hostages and two royal galleons, as well as destroying ships and property worth four million

ducats before moving north, apparently intending to attack Lisbon. As Don Juan de Silva, charged with the defence of Portugal, bitterly observed: 'A king of Spain can preserve his reputation without capturing London' but 'it cannot be preserved or recovered if we lose Lisbon in the same way we lost Cádiz'. Given that the Portuguese refused to serve under the Castilian commander appointed by the king, it was perhaps fortunate for Philip that the English sailed for home without putting his 'reputation' to the test.[11]

King versus Cortes

As usual, failure did not shake Philip's determination 'to put our trust in God': he continued to fight multiple enemies on multiple fronts, even though his wars cost roughly twice his total revenues. He therefore reconvened the Cortes of Castile and asked them to vote yet more taxes to fund his foreign wars, but the assembly that began in May 1592 lasted twice as long as any of its predecessors, largely because some deputies defied their king. Senior ministers reminded the Cortes that 'His Majesty had exhausted all his royal patrimony, and on top of that he owes thirteen million ducats in unsecured loans' and 'that all the resources and devices on which His Majesty might rely for the preservation and defence of these realms' were exhausted; but instead, they found, 'almost all the deputies wish to beseech Your Majesty most insistently that, before anything else, you order a reduction in war expenditure, both in the Netherlands and elsewhere'.[12] One deputy bluntly stated that 'although the wars with the Dutch, England and France are holy and just, we must beg Your Majesty that they cease', while another urged 'Your Majesty to abandon all these wars, making the best terms that you can'.[13]

Philip had never taken criticism well, and he now delivered a biting reprimand to the doubting deputies: 'Tell them that these wars are necessary and unavoidable unless Spain is to suffer the miseries that afflict other parts of Christendom,' he instructed one of his ministers, who must also insist that

> they should and must place their trust in me, in the love I have for these kingdoms, and in the long experience I have in governing them, [and accept] that I shall always do what is in their best interests. Speak to them at length in this vein and advise them that they are never, on any pretext, to come to me with such a suggestion again.[14]

In addition, Philip offered some deputies bribes in return for a favourable vote and intimidated others with summary arrests and house searches. He even sent a message to 'forewarn the theologians' of all towns represented in the Cortes 'that if the deputies should turn to them for advice, they may include in their opinions

a full account of my obligations, and the reasons why we must find a remedy for the needs that face us' (and he sneakily demanded that the theologians share with him what they discovered).[15] Instead of winning over 'the troublemakers' (*los dificultosos*, as the government termed its critics), however, the king's combination of intransigence and interference fostered an 'organized opposition with a coherent political agenda' in the Cortes: an agenda that I. A. A. Thompson has termed 'Castile first'. By spring 1596 the opposition had become so articulate and inflexible that some ministers favoured dissolving the Cortes so that 'we might convene others who are not so attached to their pretensions or so smart'.[16]

Then came the Anglo-Dutch assault on Cádiz. According to historian Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo, 'This episode was perceived in Spain as a national disgrace and an irreparable humiliation that produced a wave of pessimism and sadness.' Shortly after hearing the news, Philip composed a strongly worded 'I told you so' rebuke to the Cortes.

> The experience we are now beginning to suffer in our homeland shows how advantageous it would have been to keep our enemies tied down in their homeland when we had the chance, and how important it would have been to be able to do so now, if we had not run out of resources . . . You cannot find a better defence for your own homeland than to make war abroad. Everyone can clearly see and understand that whatever wars I have waged abroad have been to maintain the calm, peace and quiet of these kingdoms, and to keep away from them the misfortunes that war brings.[17]

Suitably chastened, the deputies now voted new taxes, but they attached numerous conditions: that the money could be used only to pay for the defence of Spain, not for any foreign war; that the Cortes itself must oversee collection and disbursement of the funds; that the king and his heir must 'promise and obligate themselves and their successors to the inviolable observance' of all the concessions; and that any breach of these and other conditions would put an end to tax collection. The king refused: 'Even if I and my successors wanted to comply with some conditions, it would be impossible.'[18] While the king and the Cortes haggled, Philip's wars continued to drain his resources. Even before the sack of Cádiz the marquis de Poza, president of the council of Finance, described Spain's impossible financial and strategic position to Moura just as bluntly as had the 'troublemakers' in the Cortes:

> His Majesty must see that it is impossible to carry on as we are, because although we have already spent all His Majesty's revenues until the year 1599, his expenses continue and even increase, so that even if his revenues were unencumbered, we could not carry on. To do this, one only needs to know

> what I know: that His Majesty must either reduce his expenditure voluntarily until things improve, or else find a way to achieve the impossible.

A few days later he added despairingly: 'Even if we escape from this obstacle, we will inevitably encounter another one tomorrow because each day is more impossible than the last.'[19]

The borrower from hell

To anyone who had lived through the fiscal crisis of 1574–5, such language could mean only one thing: another bankruptcy. Given that 'here we are drowning tied back-to-back' (in Moura's colourful phrase) on 13 November 1596, 'since loans are now so hard to find, and the total that we now owe' to bankers exceeded 14 million ducats, Philip signed another Default Decree that suspended all interest payments and confiscated the capital of all outstanding loans. Castile had become the world's first serial defaulter on sovereign debt and Philip had become, in the phrase of a recent book, 'the borrower from hell'.[20]

The decree produced the predictable chaos. In Spain 'all trade ceased and it was feared that many merchants would be ruined', while in the Netherlands Philip's commanders received orders that

> If the [Dutch] rebels attack you, then you and the officers and soldiers with you should still do what is expected of honourable men; but if you find that you face intolerable pressure before relief can reach you, then rather than sacrifice yourself, I charge and command you to make the best terms you can.[21]

When the Cortes complained about the hopeless situation, the king again replied 'I told you so':

> It grieved His Majesty more than anyone that his needs have caused this Decree, without any way to avoid it. If His Majesty could defend this kingdom with his own body alone he would do it; but since this cannot be done without money, and since he has none, the said Decree was unavoidable. In addition, part of the cause lies in the delay of the Cortes in providing him with assistance.[22]

Such rhetoric did nothing to solve the underlying problems, since Philip's wars continued to cost double his revenues and, as Moura put it, 'however much more we acquire, the more we have to defend and the more our enemies want to take from us'. While Philip poured his resources into France in a vain attempt

to prevent Henry of Navarre from becoming king, a small but well-trained Dutch army captured one Spanish-held stronghold after another, doubling the size of the Republic by 1598.[23]

Philip's difficulties in securing troops, fleets and the funds to sustain them during the last decade of his reign were not entirely of his own making. An episode of global cooling caused freak weather conditions. According to James Casey, 'The 1590s were a decade of extremely bad weather' in Spain: the chronicles and tithe records for Valencia and Murcia revealed 'an exceptional run of wet years between 1589 and 1598'.[24] Andalusia also suffered an unparalleled sequence of extremely wet years between 1590 and 1593 and again between 1595 and 1597. Further north, the problem was not too much rain but too little: a series of tree rings from Navacerrada, high in the Guadarrama mountains that divide Old and New Castile, reveals that the lowest annual precipitation ever recorded in the past millennium occurred during the 1590s. At the same time, an epidemic of bubonic plague moved inexorably south from the port-cities of Cantabria. In Mateo Alemán's bitter novel *The Life of Guzmán de Alfarache*, as the hungry narrator travelled from Cazorla to Madrid in 1598 he observed grimly that

> people gave little charity, and no wonder because the year was generally sterile; and if it was bad in Andalusia, it was worse as one entered the kingdom of Toledo, and the further inland the worse the scarcity. That was when I heard people say: 'God save you from the plague descending from Castile and hunger rising from Andalusia.'[25]

The widespread misery led Fray Diego de Yepes to send Philip a hard-hitting analysis of the situation that came close to spiritual blackmail. 'Since Your Majesty's indispositions prevent me from saying some things in person,' the confessor began, 'I cannot avoid saying them in writing.' After detailing concrete examples of negligence and malfeasance in government, he concluded:

> God has entrusted the conservation of the Catholic faith and the expansion of the Christian religion to Your Majesty, and since they both depend on the sound government, justice and prosperity of these kingdoms of Spain I hope you will be pleased to arrange matters so that on the Day of Judgment (which is not far off), you can appear in the presence of God confident that you have done everything possible.

When nothing improved, Yepes sent an equally stark warning to Moura that fighting wars and rising taxes at a time of dearth 'will bring down our world'. He also deployed spiritual blackmail on his colleague:

> Your Lordship can see where this leads. The poor cry out, but His Majesty does not hear them, nor does he want to hear me. I simply do not know what to do. May God in His mercy protect Your Lordship, whom the world blames for all this (along with me). . . I beg Your Lordship to look into this carefully, and advise His Majesty, because I have had no luck in writing or speaking to him.[26]

Exit strategies

Such defeatism, coupled with the news that Elizabeth, Henry IV and the Dutch leaders had signed a triple alliance against Spain and now sought to coordinate their attacks, convinced Philip and his most trusted ministers that they must make peace at any price. Despite the objections of a committee of theologians that it was contrary 'to the law of conscience' they concluded a general settlement with those affected by the Default Decree by which, in return for resumption of interest on the confiscated capital of their earlier loans, a consortium of bankers signed new loans worth over seven million ducats to fund one last campaign.[27] Philip also empowered Albert, now his governor-general in the Netherlands, to undertake indirect peace negotiations with England. At first, the king tied his nephew's hands – 'you will conduct yourself in this matter in such a way that you do not close the door to peace, but do not open it either' – but later conceded broad powers, similar to those he had conferred on his lieutenants in the first half of the reign: 'Since you know about everything, you will be able to derive the best possible advantage; and since I have delegated everything to you, I have nothing more to say except that I await news of what happens.'[28] Philip also accepted a papal offer to mediate a settlement with Henry IV of France, who saw peace with Spain as the best way to end the French civil war and consolidate his domestic position. The peace of Vervins, signed on 2 May 1598, largely confirmed the terms agreed at Cateau-Cambrésis thirty-nine years before, permitting Philip and his advisers to present it as a successful outcome since Spain sacrificed little territory.

Shortly afterwards, in Madrid, the king approved the marriage treaty between his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia and Albert; and then, together with her and Prince Philip, he signed an act that ceded limited sovereignty in the Netherlands to Isabella and Albert. Spanish influence was limited to defence, foreign policy and matrimonial affairs (if Isabella should die before her brother, leaving no heirs, he would succeed her; if she had a daughter, then the daughter should marry the king or prince of Spain, in order to reunite the Monarchy). In August 1598, in Brussels, Albert assumed power in Isabella's name and left for Spain to marry her, joining en route the prince's bride-to-be. The king had at last followed his father's advice and partitioned his inheritance.

When seeking a bride for his son, the king had as usual confined himself to Habsburg candidates, eventually narrowing his search to the three teenage daughters of his cousin, Archduke Charles of Styria. He requested portraits of all three (almost impossible to tell apart) but his first choice, the oldest, died almost immediately. Her mother obligingly offered to send both her younger daughters to Spain, where Philip could choose one as his daughter-in-law and keep the other in reserve in Las Descalzas Reales. Her prescience was soon vindicated. Philip requested the pope's dispensation for his son to marry the older surviving archduchess despite 'the multiple degrees of consanguinity and parentage' that existed between them (cousins on both their mothers' and their fathers' sides), but no sooner had the pope complied than she too died, forcing Philip to request an identical dispensation for his son to marry her only remaining sibling, Margarita, then just thirteen years old. Once again the pope obliged; Margarita and the prince married in May 1599, and she lived long enough to give birth to five children, all of whom survived into adulthood. The future of the Spanish Habsburgs at last seemed secure.[29]

'My children and my grandchildren'

Although Philip died six months before his son's wedding, he already had grandchildren. In April 1588 he congratulated his daughter Catalina 'you have done very well to have three fine children in just three years'. The previous day, he noted, 'was your wedding anniversary and that night you began an activity at which you evidently excel, judging by its fruit' – a surprisingly vulgar reference to his daughter's sex life. The following year Philip received not only descriptions but also paintings of the new family members. 'I was delighted to read what you wrote about my grandsons, and to receive the little book that the duke [of Savoy] sent me containing your portrait and theirs – although I would much prefer to see you and them, because I'm sure I would enjoy their pranks' – a surprising comment, since Philip had shown little interest in the 'pranks' of his own children. But his love for Catalina was unfeigned and profound, and when news arrived of her death in childbirth in 1597 he wept and howled and grieved so long that one of the monks at the Escorial believed that it 'deprived the king of many days of life and health'.[30]

The king's love for his older daughter was also unfeigned and profound. After Catalina left Spain, Isabella was 'normally with her father', visiting him every day after dinner, travelling with him, and sometimes even signing letters in his name when arthritis prevented him from signing himself.[31] This makes the cruel fate that the king planned for her 'if she is not married at the time of my death' doubly remarkable. In a secret codicil to his testament of 1594 he wrote, 'I declare and command that she may choose as her residence, until she

marries, either the Alcázar of Segovia or the palace at Tordesillas'. Although the king went on to praise the 'great virtues and qualities that God has given her', and affirmed 'the love I have and owe to such a daughter', he still planned to exile her from her only living relatives (her brother Philip at court, and her aunt María and cousin Margarita in Las Descalzas Reales) to either the fortress where Lupercio Latrás (and many others) had been imprisoned and executed or the palace where his grandmother Juana had languished in solitary confinement. Although Philip's survival for four more years saved Isabella from this fate, his decree displayed extraordinary insensitivity towards a daughter 'whom I love so tenderly on account of her virtues and because she has been such good company for me'.[32]

Philip's plans for her brother, the prince of Asturias, were more conventional and reflected his unhappy experience with his first heir, Don Carlos. When in 1585 the king created a household for Prince Philip, then seven years old, the new governor, Don Juan de Zúñiga (son and homonym of the king's own stern governor) reminded his master that 'I have seen the damage that arose from the factions in the household' of Don Carlos, so 'it would be best for the servants of His Highness to be allies of his governor, so that this danger does not arise'.[33] The king evidently paid heed, choosing the rest of the prince's servants primarily for their loyalty, rather than for their talent. The prince's tutor, García de Loaysa Girón, exemplified the loyal mediocrity that Philip promoted. On hearing of his appointment, someone who claimed to have been Loaysa's 'intimate and devoted servant' for thirty years lamented that although the new tutor knew all about

> languages, mathematics, astrology, logic, philosophy, metaphysics, theology . . . he is ignorant of a thousand other things. He has never learned to speak with a woman, whether good or bad; what to do with playing cards; . . . or that there are more streets in Alcalá than the one that leads from his house to the church and the university.[34]

The writer could hardly have identified more accurately those skills that Philip would *not* want his heir to learn! Chatting up women, playing cards and being street-wise (especially in Alcalá) were precisely the vices that (in the king's mind) had ruined Don Carlos.

Perhaps Philip over-reacted – surrounding his son with servants who were worthy but dull and whose first loyalty was to the king increased the attraction to the prince of an older courtier devoted to *him*: Don Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, count of Lerma and marquis of Denia – but that development lay in the future; for the time being, Loaysa's pedagogy produced admirable results. In 1594 Philip allowed his son to sign 'I the prince' (*Yo el príncipe*) on routine letters and warrants, countersigned by a royal secretary 'By order of His Majesty,

and of His Highness in his name'. Three years later, according to the nuncio, 'The prince already takes a full part in government' and 'every day provides evidence of his increasing discretion and valour'. All this, he concluded, 'promises a wonderful new Golden Age'. Nevertheless, the nuncio continued, although the prince affixed his signature, 'all the documents are drawn up by order of His Majesty, so that there is little difference or distinction between the prince's signature and the stamp which used to be used in the king's name'. Moreover, when the king was sick Moura acted as 'arbiter of the affairs of all his kingdoms, of his councils, of his armies, of his fleets, of his ministers, of his treasury'.[35]

Philip did his best to ensure there would be continuity after his death. 'I am very satisfied with Don Cristóbal de Moura,' he wrote in a paper of instruction to his son during his last illness, 'and with the other ministers whom I keep at my side' (that is: the Junta de Gobierno); but

> As a ruler, you must employ the services of everyone, each in his own office, without becoming the servant of any individual. Instead you should listen to many, and keep your opinion of them secret so that you remain free to choose the best, acting as master and leader. This will bring you prestige, whereas the opposite [course] will squander it because instead of commanding, which is what kings do, you will be commanded.[36]

Philip also prepared two more personal papers of advice for his son. One was 'something that St Louis king of France prepared for his son, just before his death' three centuries before: Philip transcribed it in his own hand and gave it to his confessor, with orders to pass it on to his son after his death. It contained many platitudes about faith (love God and avoid sin; confess regularly; advance the Catholic faith and obey the pope; attend Mass and hear sermons regularly) and justice (the prince should neither speak nor hear ill of others; should allow no blasphemy; should uphold the law; and should favour the poor). Some of St Louis's other pious injunctions coincided with Philip's own outlook: 'If you are thinking of undertaking anything of importance, share it with your confessor or some other pious men of exemplary life so that you will know what you should do'; 'when you suffer adversities, endure them with courage and consider that you richly deserved them, and that way you will learn from them'; 'Do not make war, especially against other Christians, without good cause and counsel'; 'As far as you can, preserve peace.'[37]

Philip kept a final paper of advice in a special casket. A little before his death, he asked for the casket and took out the 'paper that it contained and gave it to the prince, saying: "You will find here the way to rule your kingdom" '. In essence the document was an attempt to tie his son's hands, even though he was already 20. The king reminded him:

> With the love of a father who is so fond of you and so wants you to get things right, and with the experience I have of all the men who will serve you, I have talked to you, among other things, about the persons I think worthy of promotion, whom you can trust and use for the well-being of these kingdoms. I remind and advise you to remember well what I have told you. I think you will find it useful.[38]

None of Philip's instructions on 'how to rule your kingdom' contained the sort of detailed advice provided to him by his own father half a century before; but this is not surprising because, both in 1543 and 1548, Charles wrote when he was far away and feared he might die before he saw his heir again. Philip, by contrast, lived under the same roof as his son and he explicitly referred to 'what I have already told you'. He did not need to write it all down.

From Madrid to Purgatory, via the Escorial

In May 1597 Philip turned 70, and like many septuagenarians, he spent more time sick and more time asleep – 'Every day, His Majesty gets up after lunch and goes to bed after dinner,' Velada noted – and everything he did took more time. Thus the journey from Madrid to the Escorial, which the king had once managed on horseback in a day, could now take a week, and when he arrived sometimes 'he had to go straight to his sickbed'.[39] Any setback that threated the king's health alarmed his courtiers because (as one of them put it) as soon as Philip died 'we are on another stage and all the characters in this play will be altogether new'. When 'the old king leaves us', he continued lugubriously, 'another era begins, and we do not know how it will be'. The harbingers of change were everywhere. During the fiesta of St John in June 1598 the prince of Asturias took the future duke of Lerma with him to the bullfights in Madrid's Plaza Mayor, and they watched together ostentatiously from a window. Everyone could see that Lerma sat 'very close to His Highness's chair' and that 'the prince ignored all the other courtiers'.[40] Uncertainty about the future paralysed the affairs of the Monarchy. According to Velada, 'the councillors feel they can no longer tell the king everything, so they try to prolong and postpone everything'; and although 'the prince our lord orders and resolves what needs to be done, as long as his father lives he does so with great respect and moderation'.[41]

This uncertainty did not continue for long. A few days after the fiesta of St John, although his doctors advised him to rest, Philip left Madrid for the last time, 'prepared to go and die in his royal monastery of St Lawrence' which, Fray José de Sigüenza claimed, he had decided long before would be 'his glorious tomb'. The king travelled there 'in the same chair that they used to carry him around the palace, carried by four boys' and, to avoid the intense heat, he only

travelled in the evenings. This time, instead of resting after his arrival, the king immediately travelled 'all round the buildings in his chair, from top to bottom, leaving nothing unseen. Such dramatic changes in his health left his doctors amazed.'[42] On 22 July 1598 Philip took to his bed, but for some weeks he still managed to transact business. He nominated several prelates to vacancies; he gave many of his personal servants handsome rewards; he appointed some officials to positions in the household of his future daughter-in-law, Margarita; and he pardoned some prisoners, including some of those involved in the revolt of Aragon. He even showed mercy to 'the wife of Antonio Pérez: provided she retires to a monastery, she can leave prison, and she can receive back the property that belongs to her, and her children may inherit their share of it'.[43]

On 17 August, although in great pain and helplessly incontinent, Philip gave a final audience to Caetani, who 'found him in bed, immobile and extremely weak, but with all his senses alert and an admirable composure of spirit'. The nuncio first invited the king to 'ask pardon for all his faults, sins and errors that he had committed through malicious and false information and advice' (perhaps a reference to the murder of Escobedo?). Then he shamelessly exploited his advantage to offer the king, on behalf of the pope, substantial spiritual benefits if he would grant the pope certain disputed jurisdictions in his dominions (chapter 5):

> I begged only one thing from His Majesty in order to remove all the impediments and obstacles that stood in his way [to heaven]: namely that he should make a clear declaration that he wanted to settle and resolve the jurisdictional problem in all his kingdoms and dominions, that he should give the Church what was really its due, and that he should tell the prince of his intention.

Despite the excruciating pain, his fear of Purgatory, and the ignominy of lying in his own excrement, Philip firmly rejected this naked attempt at blackmail:

> His Majesty told me, with a smiling face and a fearless spirit, that he was greatly pleased by my visit, that his illness was serious and he was prepared to die, that he submitted himself to the judgment of God on whether he would live or die, and that he wanted nothing more than to die in a state of grace and seek forgiveness for his sins.

He then stated that 'he was resolved to settle these matters of jurisdiction, that his intention had always been that the Church and the Apostolic See should get respect and reverence, and the prince would do the same . . . Up to this point,' the nuncio continued, 'I understood everything he said, because he made a great effort to speak loudly and clearly,' but afterwards, 'although he spoke

many other words on this matter, I missed them because he lacked the strength and said them in a confused and obscure manner.' The king had not lost his grip, however. Two days later, with shaking hand, he signed a document expressing his desire to resolve the 'conflicts between the ecclesiastical and secular jurisdictions' – but instead of unilaterally giving ground as the nuncio requested, Philip proposed that the pope and he should 'sort everything out through the intercession of some respected, knowledgeable and upright people who would dispassionately clarify what appertained to each of the parties'. And 'if Our Lord should call me before this can be done, I charge and command the prince my son to follow through – making clear that he should not agree to anything prejudicial to the royal jurisdiction where it is founded in truth'. Philip thus remained true to his father's instructions fifty years before: 'to behave with the submission of a good son of the Church . . . without giving them any just cause for offence with you. But do this without any prejudice to the pre-eminences, prosperity, and peace of the said kingdoms.'[44] It was an impressive display of Philip's iron resolve even as his death approached.

On 1 September, Philip signed a document granting permission for the marriage of Isabella Clara Eugenia, but it proved to be his last act as king. He continued to lie incontinent on the bed in his tiny study in the Escorial, unable to move and unable to bear being touched because sores developed all over his emaciated body. Sometimes the doctors caused so much pain as they treated them that 'he cried out that he could not stand it'. He sometimes asked them 'to stop for a moment and at other times pleaded that they should treat him more gently', and during one especially painful procedure he announced 'that he was going to die in their hands'. According to his valet, Jehan Lhermite, 'the stench that emanated from these sores', and also from his soiled bed, constituted 'a different kind of torment, on account of his lifelong concern with personal hygiene'.[45]

Although he could not move, the king could still watch and listen, and his devotions during his final illness reveal a great deal about his personal faith. Guided by his confessor, Philip studied certain passages of the Bible (especially the Psalms and passages from the Gospel that emphasized forgiveness: the redemption of Mary Magdalene; the return of the Prodigal Son; pardoning the thief on the Cross) and the spiritual works of two subjects whom he had known personally: Luis de Granada from Spain and Louis de Blois (Blosius) from the Netherlands. Isabella and Yepes took turns reading out extracts from Blosius, and the king repeated them, often several times – particularly passages about how human anguish as well as Christ's Passion can redeem penitent sinners. Physical suffering in this life, Blosius suggested, lessened the sinner's punishments in the afterlife, and perhaps his intense and repeated meditation on such passages helped the king to endure the constant pain.

Philip also found spiritual comfort in images. Although today his apartment at the Escorial is almost bare, during his last illness the king 'had crucifixes and relics surrounding his bed and on all the walls'. His devotion to them is revealed by an anecdote told by Lhermite: 'One day His Majesty was lying sick in his bed and he suddenly needed to urinate. Before taking the urinal, he asked me to cover with a curtain an image he revered of Christ before Pilate and another of the Virgin that hung near his bed' – evidence that Philip saw these images as capable of experiencing the events around them. As Carlos Eire has pointed out, 'To him they were silent, supernatural witnesses and companions.'[46] The same was true of the thousands of relics which the king had assembled at the Escorial, and every day the monks brought a different selection to his bedside, where he revered and kissed them and had them placed on his sores. One day, after a 'great display of these heavenly treasures', their custodian 'thought he had finished and started to take them away, when the king said "Look: you have forgotten the relics of such-and-such a saint, and you have not brought it for me to kiss!" ' When pain or exhaustion caused Philip to lose consciousness, the Infanta Isabella found that the only sure way to rouse him was to say loudly ' "Don't touch the relics!", pretending that someone was near to one, and the king immediately opened his eyes'.[47]

The king also continued his normal devotions. From his sickbed he followed the services celebrated at the high altar of the basilica and he had holy water sprinkled on his face and body, confident in the Church's teaching that it could wash away venial sins. He spent much time listening to a succession of preachers (when they tired, he would command 'Fathers, tell me more!') and he confessed frequently (on one occasion he took three days, apparently reviewing the sins of his entire life). He received extreme unction twice, and took communion until his doctors warned that he would be unable to swallow the host.

Philip had prayed that he would be fully conscious during his last moments of life and his prayers were answered. On the night of 12 September he underwent a paroxysm so powerful that those around his bed 'thought he had died, but he suddenly opened his eyes with an unusual liveliness'. He began to laugh softly, realizing that he was about to die fully conscious. He asked for his parents' crucifix 'and held it with a fervour and devotion' that amazed everyone. Then 'he kissed it several times and afterwards he also held a consecrated candle from Our Lady of Montserrat, on which you could see the image of the Virgin herself, and kissed it too'. For two hours he focused on the crucifix and the candle until at five o'clock on 13 September 1598, 'as dawn broke in the east' and 'as the seminary choristers were singing Mass', Lhermite, Sigüenza and several others watched as their king 'gave two or three gasps, and his saintly spirit left him to enjoy eternal life'.[48]

The king is dead! Long live the king!

Looking back in 1605 on the king's death, Sigüenza invoked the already popular trope that Philip had ruled 'an empire on which the sun never set'.

> With the dawn of that most happy day, which was a Sunday, the new king assumed power. He began to govern the greatest empire under the sun, because if he had sent letters announcing the news [of his father's death] from the point where the sun rises to where it sets, returning to the same place, he would have found his own subjects to receive them everywhere.[49]

Everywhere the late king's subjects went into mourning. In Brussels, a funeral service took place on 29 December, the fortieth anniversary of the service there for Charles V; in New Spain and in the Philippines (appropriately enough, given Philip's lifelong support for the Holy Office) the Inquisition organized the royal exequies. Many of Spain's allies also arranged splendid commemorations. In Florence, the Grand Duke commissioned an impressive iconographic programme that included twenty-four enormous paintings by local artists of different episodes from the king's life; while in Rome, Pope Clement VIII paid tribute to the fact that 'His Late Majesty never wished to grant freedom of conscience'.

> Because he wanted to make the subjects of other rulers follow the Catholic faith and obey this Holy See, he encumbered his royal patrimony and spent all the wealth that came to him from America and all the revenues provided by Castile throughout his long reign. One could therefore say that the king's entire life was a constant struggle against the enemies of our Holy Faith.[50]

Some of his Late Majesty's subjects felt less enthusiasm for the 'constant struggle' that had consumed their patrimony too. Some inhabitants of Madrid immediately fretted about the expense – 'mourning His Majesty, whose death is now confirmed, will cost us an arm and a leg' – and, indeed, as soon as they got the news, only six hours after the event, the city council ordered:

> All people of every degree and quality shall wear mourning for the king our lord, who is in glory, within three days. Women will put on black bonnets and shall wear no dresses of silk. Those who cannot afford to wear mourning or a *caperuza* [a special pointed hat] shall wear a hat without trimmings as a sign of sorrow.[51]

Since all the Spanish kingdoms had already recognized Prince Philip as their next ruler, his succession was automatic, and on 11 October 'the city of Madrid

raised the standard of the new king'. A week later, hooded and clothed in black, young Philip III presided over two days of funeral ceremonies in the royal convent of San Jerónimo, with a vast catafalque modelled on the Escorial, illuminated by a thousand huge candles while 1,500 more candles lit the church.

Historian Carlos Eire has argued that 'the death of no other monarch or public figure in early modern European history ever attracted as much attention as that of Philip II', basing his assessment on the survival of over forty printed funeral sermons and descriptions of local commemorations of the late king. Salamanca, a university town, held a poetry competition with prizes for the best Latin epigram and the best Spanish sonnet to celebrate the late king's achievements.[52] But few other cities could afford such splendour. In Palencia, the magistrates decreed that everyone should go into mourning and, as in Madrid, 'those who could not afford this should wear a hat without trimmings'; but, in view of the general poverty, the magistrates of Palencia added that those who could not afford a hat 'should wear something black on their heads'. In Cádiz, still recovering from the 'destruction and damage done by the English fleet' in 1596, the magistrates discussed 'where we might find money to comply with our obligation to wear mourning and perform the ceremonies' and struggled to pay for the damask to make 'the royal standard required to celebrate the new king's accession'. They tried to economize by recycling 'the timber used for the catafalque to make the stage on which we will raise the standard' but when they eventually 'tried to auction off the timber, no one came to buy it'. In desperation, 'they tried to make some carpenters buy' the wood but such was the prevailing poverty that 'they did not want to pay a single penny for it'.[53]

Only Seville staged exequies that rivalled those of Madrid. When news of Philip's death arrived, the council determined 'to put on the greatest spectacle ever seen', and to this end black drapes and flags went up all around the city, driving up the price of black cloth until the magistrates had to impose price controls. A magnificent catafalque, modelled (like that in Madrid) on the Escorial and illuminated with over 2,000 candles, stood in the midst of the darkened cathedral to serve as the focus when, on 26 November, the city's clergy, magistrates, judges and Inquisitors filed in to take part in the ceremony. As their eyes grew accustomed to the light, however, the various groups of dignitaries noticed subtle differences in the quality and quantity of seats assigned to them. Arguments broke out among them until, in the middle of the funeral Mass, the Inquisitors excommunicated the magistrates because they would not vacate their superior seats. The ceremony ended in chaos. Eventually the council of Castile resolved all the precedence disputes and Seville re-staged its solemn exequies at the end of December. This time everything transpired without incident until a 'swaggering poet' declaimed a sonnet 'To the catafalque of King Philip II in Seville' that scandalized the audience:

I swear to God, such grandeur leaves me stunned,
and I'd give a doubloon if I could describe it!
For who is not filled with wonder, or does not marvel
at this splendour, at this great structure?

By the living Christ! Each part is worth
more than a million. Isn't it a shame
that it will not last a century. Oh great Seville,
Rome triumphant in spirit and in riches!

I'll bet that the dead man's spirit
has today abandoned Heaven,
where he rests eternally, to enjoy this spot.

A braggart overheard these words and said:
'What you say, gentleman soldier, is true,
and anyone who says otherwise is lying.'

And then straight away (*incontinente*)
he put on his hat, brandished his sword,
glanced around and stole off. And that was that.[54]

The scandal arose not only from the blasphemy of uttering oaths in a church, but also from the general sarcasm about the amount of money spent on ephemera ('such grandeur leaves me stunned'; 'each part' of the temporary catafalque of wood and cardboard 'is worth more than a million'). Worse still, the poem was scatological: the term *incontinente* (a double entendre in Spanish) reminded everyone of the late king's terminal diarrhoea, described in every account of his final agony. Yet the 'swaggering poet' knew from personal experience what it meant to serve the late king as a 'gentleman soldier': his name was Miguel de Cervantes.

Many other Spaniards, male and female, bitterly criticized the late king. Two days after his death, the pious Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza shared with a friend her hope that 'God will guide [Philip III] for the good of the Church, so that he can prevent the ruin of the kingdom'. The following month, Iñigo Ibáñez de Santa Cruz, secretary of the marquis of Denia (the Favourite of the new monarch and soon to be duke of Lerma), wrote a comprehensive guide to 'The causes of the ignorant and confused government in the time of the late King Philip II, our lord'. Ibáñez excoriated not only the excessive cost of Philip's foreign policy ('thirty million wasted in the bogs of Flanders' and 'as much again' in the fruitless wars against France and England) but also his addiction to 'trivia' (*menudencias*): he was 'one of those men who know a lot about a little but is totally ignorant about everything else'. He also ridiculed the late king's

personal habits ('a friend of women, paintings, beautiful gardens, big buildings, and intricate apartments' with a taste for 'perfumes and aromatic scents and other feminine things') and his alleged dependence on mediocre ministers (like Mateo Vázquez and Don Cristóbal de Moura). 'Oh wretched Spain,' Ibañez concluded, 'wretched Monarchy: lost, ruined and wasted.'[55]

That same month, Balthasar Álamos de Barrientos, an ally of Antonio Pérez, composed a blistering 'Discourse to the King Our Lord about the current state of his realms' that almost parodied Charles V's 'Political Testament' just half a century before (chapter 2). Álamos de Barrientos noted the hostility of almost all the Monarchy's neighbours. France now boasted a powerful king who ruled a unified state and sought every opportunity to foster a war in Italy that would weaken Spain further. England's inveterate hatred had led it to support Spain's rebels, to interlope in the Americas and even to launch direct attacks on the peninsula. The independent states of Italy, even the Papacy, all resented Spanish dominance and longed to see it end. Álamos also described at length the discontents of the new king's subjects, with open rebellion in the northern Netherlands, vehement anti-Spanish sentiment in the south, and discontent in Portugal, Spanish Italy, Aragon and the Americas. This left Castile to carry the entire burden of empire, but 'the cities of the kingdom lack men, the smaller villages are totally depopulated, and hardly anyone is left to work the fields'. Therefore, Álamos continued, 'nowhere is free from this misery, and no one has the wealth and abundance that they used to have'; and he blamed this 'primarily on the burden of taxes, and the fact that the yield is spent on foreign wars'.[56]

The chorus of critics included several clerics, starting with some of those who delivered sermons at memorial services for the late king. In November 1598, Fray Lorenzo de Ayala, preaching in Valladolid (the late king's birthplace), noted:

> Our Catholic King died after a drought that lasted almost nine months without a break, revealing that the earth had declared itself bankrupt – just like an unsuccessful merchant. At the same time, the price of everything in Castile increased as supplies ran short, coinciding with the collapse of public health throughout the kingdom and opening the door to plague in many areas.

'These disasters,' he concluded ominously, 'were harbingers of the greatest catastrophe Spain has ever suffered since our Patriarch Tubal, grandson of Noah, settled here.' A few months later a Jesuit, Juan de Mariana, published a political treatise that included a remarkable section explicitly attributing the failure of the Armada to the sins of its creator:

> A few years ago, we sent a great fleet to the shores of England and we sustained a wound, an ignominy, which the passage of the years cannot efface. That was a punishment for the sins of our nation but, unless memory fails, God was also enraged by the vile lusts of a certain prince who had forgotten the sacred personage he was, in his advanced age if not senility; and the rumour spread at that time that he had indulged himself immoderately in lasciviousness.

In 1600, Martín González de Cellorigo, a lawyer who worked for the Inquisition, published a memorial arguing that the 'decline of Spain' (a term he invented) had begun under Philip, so that the country 'is today in a state that we all believe to be worse than ever before'.[57]

Even some of the late king's close collaborators agreed. Two weeks after Philip's death the Venetian ambassador heard Don Martín de Padilla, captain-general of the Ocean Sea, 'declare that the world would see what Spaniards could do, now that they have a free hand and are no longer subject to a single brain that thought it knew all that could be known and treated everyone else like a blockhead'. Padilla was scarcely less outspoken when he addressed the new king directly:

> I grieve to see that, because we lack the funds, we undertake campaigns with such weak forces that they serve more to irritate our enemies than to punish them; and the worst is that, whatever we may say, we eternalize the wars so that they become an infinite burden, and the problems that stem from these wars are both major and endless.[58]

From Purgatory to Paradise

Not all Spaniards shared this pessimism, however. The marquis of Velada, one of those present at the king's death, entertained no doubt that 'His Majesty died like a saint this morning'; while according to another eyewitness, 'it is entirely credible that after such a life and such a death we may count His Majesty as a saint'.[59] Somewhat later, 'various pious individuals, through divine revelation, saw the soul of the most prudent king enter Paradise, after being in Purgatory' – but the 'pious individuals' failed to agree on the time frame. A Carmelite nun claimed it took place after only eight days; while a chaste maiden claimed to have seen the king's soul ascend exactly fourteen days after his death. Five years later, at Marchena in Andalusia, Sor María de la Antigua saw in a vision on three consecutive Sundays a 'fire' in the sky which, she claimed, 'the whole world saw'; but she only learned its significance later when she heard about the vision of Fray Julián de San Agustín (or Alcalá), a pious Franciscan who by then had over 600 miracles to his credit.[60] It had taken place near the village of Paracuellos de Járama:

> One day in late September in the year 1603, [Fray Julián] said in front of five witnesses that at 9 p.m., or a little later, two red clouds would appear in the sky, one in the east and the other in the west, and they would unite; and at the moment they united the soul of the Catholic King Philip II of glorious memory would leave Purgatory and enter Paradise.

Having made this prophecy, according to Fray Antonio de Daza (who wrote a short biography of his fellow Franciscan), Fray Julián retired to pray,

> And the aforementioned witnesses affirm that when he said these things, the sky was clear and serene, and remained so until 9 p.m., or a little later, when two red clouds appeared in the east and in the west, so bright that the night seemed like day because you could see the houses and streets as clearly as if the sun was in the clouds.[61]

This vision became so celebrated that in the 1640s the painter Bartolomé Esteban Murillo commemorated it on a canvas for a Franciscan convent in Seville, showing Fray Julián, the five witnesses and the eerily illuminated streets of Paracuellos de Járama, as well as Philip entering Paradise (see plate 45).

However, a striking anomaly troubled Daza. Although the late king 'always strove to exalt the faith and extirpate heresy', and although he had suffered terrible agony during his last illness,

> Four years passed between his death and the time when Fray Julián had this revelation and made his prophecy – more than enough time, in our opinion, taking into account also the many prayers and Masses said throughout his dominions for his soul, to purify it in Purgatory, so that thus purified it could be with God for ever.

In his account of a similar vision by another Franciscan, this time of Charles V's soul ascending to Paradise 'four years after his death', Daza had no doubt about the cause of the delay: it was 'because he did not punish Luther when he had the chance'.[62] But why had Charles's son, who had never hesitated to burn heretics and never compromised with heresy, been detained in Purgatory? Daza could not answer his own question, and he was not alone. Hundreds of people have tried to evaluate the place of Philip II in history and legend, some seeing him as a saint and a hero who deserved a prominent place at God's right hand, others as a sinner and a villain who deserved to rot in Hell.

Epilogue

Agent and structure

In his funeral sermon for Philip II in October 1598, Dr Aguilar de Terrones used an elaborate simile to remind his hearers of the magnitude of the tasks faced by the ruler of the first global empire in history.

> The life of a king resembles that of a hand-loom weaver . . . You may think that the weaver's life is easy, because he works at home, sheltered, close to his loom; but in reality the task is very hard. He labours with his arms, but see his feet working the pedals while his eyes remain glued to the cloth lest it become tangled. His attention is divided among the many threads, some going here and others there, keeping his eye open in case any should break so that he can immediately tie it . . . Such is the life of a king: writing with his hands, travelling with his feet, his heart attached to threads – one to Flanders, another to Italy, another to Africa, another to Peru, another to Mexico, another to the English Catholics, another to preserving peace among Christian princes, another to the problems of the Holy Roman Empire. So much attention required by the various states and threads! Is the thread to the Indies broken? Hurry up and tie it! Is the thread to Flanders broken? Run and fix it! Such a busy life, divided among so many threads: how was it possible [for our king] to do so much in so short a time? Oh what excellent regal qualities, found in no one else.[1]

Perhaps because his congregation included the new king, Philip III, Aguilar de Terrones's sermon accentuated the positive and omitted the fact that the late royal 'weaver' had left an empire engaged in two costly and inconclusive wars abroad, a major economic crisis at home and several 'broken threads' (the seven provinces of the Netherlands still in rebellion). Other observers believed

that he left his Monarchy far weaker than he had found it, and for this they advanced two distinct explanations.

- A problematic inheritance. Some blamed the size and composition of the Monarchy: it had become too big for its own good, impossible to defend. The failures were therefore in essence structural: neither Philip nor any other ruler could have held his inheritance together.
- A problematic king. Others argued that the problem was not that Philip lacked sufficient resources but that he had used them inefficiently in the pursuit of impossible goals. A monarch with superior political skills could have succeeded where Philip failed – or, in modern parlance, they blamed agent rather than structure.

At first sight, the first explanation – that Philip ruled an indefensible state – seems more plausible. In the aphorism of the age: *Bella gerant alii. Tu, felix Austria, nube* ('Others make war; you, happy Habsburgs, marry') and, over time, the strategy of 'matrimonial imperialism' pursued so successfully by the dynasty created a structure that, in both political and territorial terms, was unsustainable. The union through marriage first of Austria and Burgundy, and then of Castile (with outposts in North Africa and the Americas) and Aragon (with outposts in Sardinia, Sicily and Naples), and finally of the Holy Roman Empire as well, placed half of Europe, and before long much of Central and South America too, in the hands of Charles V. Yet the emperor and his siblings formed the only common denominator of these far-flung possessions, which boasted no common language or currency, no common institutions or laws, no overall defence plan or integrated economic system. It was, perhaps, unrealistic to expect that a single monarch could ever rule all these territories effectively – especially when the same 'matrimonial imperialism' that created the vast inheritance also produced a diminished gene pool that impaired the ability of its rulers to produce competent successors (chapter 10).

Periodically, Charles contemplated a partition of his possessions by detaching Germany and the Netherlands from Spain and Italy; but he never followed through until 1555, when he allowed his son Philip, now king of England and soon to be king of Spain, to renounce his rights of succession to the Empire because (he assumed) England could henceforth guarantee the security of the Netherlands. But the death of Mary Tudor in 1558, combined with Charles's renunciation of the Empire to his brother Ferdinand that same year, left Flanders dangerously isolated. In 1567, the French ambassador in Madrid observed that 'the king has so many regions to worry about that he cannot deal with all of them', and the situation became worse after Philip became king of Portugal in 1580. The concentration of so much territory under a single

sceptre destroyed Europe's balance of power and caused France, England and the Dutch Republic to make a common alliance against Philip.[2]

Soon after the king died, some of Philip's advisers expressed despair about the underlying strategic situation. In 1602, one of Spain's leading diplomats, the duke of Sessa, confided to his colleague, Don Baltasar de Zúñiga:

> Truly, sir, I believe we are gradually becoming the target at which the whole world wants to shoot its arrows; and you know that no empire, however great, has been able to sustain many wars in different areas for long . . . Although I may be mistaken I doubt whether we can sustain an empire as scattered as ours.

The 'empire on which the sun never set' had thus become the target on which the sun never set. And yet just two years later, in another confidential letter, Sessa shared with Zúñiga a very different analysis of the underlying problem facing the Spanish Monarchy. 'What I resent is that we flit so rapidly from one area to another, without making a major effort in one and then, when that is finished, in another,' the duke lamented. 'I do not know why we eat so many snacks but never have a real meal. I would like to join everything together, so that we could perhaps do something worthwhile – either in Ireland or in North Africa – but I fear that, as usual, we shall do both and thus only lose time, men, money and reputation.'[3]

Sessa was by no means the first to suggest that Philip's main problem was not a lack of resources but rather a failure to deploy his existing resources effectively. After learning the fate of the Armada in 1588, the Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira had asked why 'such enormous resources as those available to His Majesty should have achieved so little'. Three years later Mateo Vázquez tried to convince Philip that if God 'wanted to oblige Your Majesty to provide remedies for the problems of the world he would give Your Majesty strength and resources to do so'. The Cortes of Castile went even further: 'The delegates are inclined to beg Your Majesty, with great insistence, that before doing anything else you give orders to reduce expenditure on war, in the Netherlands and elsewhere' (chapters 18 and 19). Why did the king invariably refuse to listen to such advice?

Messianic imperialism

Philip's initial triumphs – the spectacular victories at St Quentin and Gravelines; the favourable peace of Cateau-Cambrésis – seem to have convinced him that he was invincible while doing what he perceived as God's work. They led him to break off truce talks with the Ottoman sultan: 'Since there is peace between the king of France and myself,' he informed his ministers a few days after ratifying the agreement, 'it seems to me that for now it is not in my interest to negotiate

or conclude a truce' with the Turks. God wanted him to fight infidels (chapter 7). This proved a catastrophic miscalculation: a peace or truce in 1559 would have left the western Mediterranean virtually a 'Christian lake' whereas by 1577, when Philip eventually secured a ceasefire, the sultan had conquered Tunisia and brought Morocco into his orbit. Belief that he was doing God's will also led Philip to persist in his attempts to 'capture or kill' Elizabeth Tudor, despite the fact that her forces captured or destroyed Spanish ships and merchandise every year and sacked several of Philip's possessions, culminating in the humiliating capture and sack of Cádiz in 1596, while Spain did little harm to her and her subjects. When peace finally came in 1603–4, after eighteen years of suffering and sacrifice, Elizabeth's successor James Stuart refused to concede Philip's three principal war goals: withdrawal of all English garrisons from Dutch towns, toleration for England's Catholics and recognition of Spain's exclusive right to trade with America. Intervention in France to shore up the Catholic cause likewise brought Philip no permanent gains, even though the succession of civil wars that weakened his hereditary rival gave him advantages enjoyed by no other Spanish ruler, before or since. Admittedly, in 1593, Henry of Navarre found it expedient to convert to Catholicism in order to win broader support both at home and abroad; but a few days after signing peace with Spain in 1598, he granted his Protestant subjects freedom of worship, guaranteed by numerous garrisons paid by the central government.

On the day Philip died, the papal nuncio in Madrid drew up a 'score card' of the king's achievements and singled out for special praise his 'assistance to the Catholics . . . without looking after his own interests'. Although he saluted the king's achievements in England and France, he devoted more attention to the Netherlands, where the late king had 'spent vast treasure in fighting the rebels and in upholding the Catholic Faith, because he did not wish to make a peace with his subjects if it involved conditions deleterious to the Catholic Faith'. Philip agreed. In his own words, 'rather than prejudice the Faith or God's service in the slightest way, I will lose all my dominions and a hundred lives if I had them'. At Breda in 1575, the king broke off talks that had resolved almost all outstanding issues because he would not concede the religious toleration demanded by his rebellious subjects. Two years later he reneged on the Perpetual Edict and resumed the war; and he broke off peace talks with his rebels in 1579 and again in 1589 – all in order to maintain intact 'the claim His Majesty has made and the reputation he has won at the cost of so much treasure and so many lives never to make the slightest concession in religious matters'.[4] This was no understatement: one contemporary claimed that the cumulative cost of 'all the wars that Spain has waged since the time of King Pelayo [d. 737], both at home and abroad' was less than Philip's expenditure on war 'during his forty years' reign'.[5]

It may seem strange that so many reverses, despite the investment of so many resources, failed to persuade Philip to change his policy. Sir Thomas Wilson, an English observer in the Netherlands in 1574, perceived two reasons: 'The pride of the Spanish government and the cause of religion' – a combination of motives that Philip would have called 'religion and reputation'.[6] Wilson was correct: no political leader likes to admit defeat and thereby lose 'reputation', and the greater the resources invested in a struggle the harder it is to walk away. Philip was no exception. As he observed in 1575: 'I have no doubt that, if the cost of the war [in the Netherlands] continues at its present level, we will not be able to sustain it; but it would be a great shame if, having spent so much, we lost any chance that spending a little more might recover everything.'[7]

Moreover, again like other political leaders, Philip always seemed more disposed to take risks in order to avoid losses than to make gains. It was relatively easy for him to withdraw his forces from the imperial fief of Finale Liguria in 1573, even though (as his sister María astutely reminded him) 'This accursed reputation makes us take leave of our senses – and sometimes reality', because Finale had never belonged to Philip.[8] By contrast, 'reputation' was very much at stake whenever the territories he had inherited were concerned, not least because in a composite Monarchy weakness towards vassals in one area might encourage defiance by those in others. In 1566 his ministers reminded him that not only would failure to regain royal control over the Netherlands 'place at risk the reputation of Spain' throughout Europe but also that 'if the troubles in the Netherlands continue, Milan and Naples will follow'. A decade later they argued that concessions to the Dutch would endanger 'the obedience of other vassals who, it is greatly to be feared, would take it as an inspiration for their own rebellion, at least in the dominions we have conquered, like Naples and Milan', and that resuming the war in the Netherlands was the only way to uphold 'the honour and reputation of Your Majesty which is your greatest asset' when dealing with foreign powers.[9]

Drawing strength from failure

Although Philip was not the only ruler to display extreme reluctance to admit defeat, 'the cause of religion' made him react to setbacks in unusual ways. The Holocaust survivor Primo Levi, an acute observer of human nature, observed that 'few are the men who draw moral strength from failure' – but Philip was one of them.[10] His unswerving piety repeatedly led him to see failure or even outright defeat merely as a sign that God was testing him: provided he persevered along the righteous path he had chosen, the king felt sure that a miracle would bridge any gap between his interpretation of God's purposes and the resources available to attain them. His confidence on this point never wavered.

As early as 1559 he declared that 'since this depends solely on the will of God, I can only wait for whatever He is pleased to grant; and I hope that, since He has removed worse obstacles from my path, He will also remove this one, and give me the means to sustain my kingdoms, so that they will not be lost' (chapter 7). Although an unexpected setback, such as the failure of the Armada, might temporarily depress his spirits, he soon managed to see a silver lining. Thus, shortly after telling one minister in autumn 1588 that 'I hope that God has not permitted so much evil, because everything has been done for His service', and that 'I hope to die and go to God before this happens', he stated that 'I shall never fail to stand up for the cause of God and the well-being of these kingdoms' and promptly started to plan a new invasion of England (chapter 18).

His faith led Philip both to embrace unrealistic initiatives and to refuse to abandon or change them if they failed. Thus in September 1571, after eighteen months of bombarding the duke of Alba with long hortatory letters urging him to overthrow Elizabeth Tudor, Alba's logistical objections finally made an impression – but Philip now argued that, even if correct, the duke's concerns were irrelevant.

> Although your influence with Us is so great, and although I hold in the highest esteem your person and prudence in all things, and especially in the matter in which you are engaged and occupied, and although the arguments you put to Us are so convincing, I am so keen to achieve the consummation of this enterprise, I am so attached to it in my heart, and I am so convinced that God our Saviour must embrace it as His own cause, that I cannot be dissuaded, nor can I accept or believe the contrary. This leads me to understand matters differently [from you] and makes me play down the difficulties and problems that spring up; so that all the things that could either divert or stop me from carrying through this business seem less threatening to me.

Philip argued that logistics (the area of Alba's expertise) formed only one element of the Enterprise of England:

> With a matter as important as this one, it does not seem right to engage in detailed consideration of the problems that would arise if we made mistakes and failed, without counterbalancing it with the benefits and advantages that success would bring – and it cannot be doubted that in terms of religion and politics, as well as of reputation and of all the other goals that I can and must try to achieve, those [benefits and advantages] would be so great and obvious that not only do they make me support and favour the cause, but they oblige and almost compel me to do so.

In short, 'although it cannot be denied that we will encounter some obstacles and difficulties, they are outweighed by many other divine and human considerations that oblige us to take these risks and more'.[11]

Philip subjected Medina Sidonia to similar spiritual blackmail when in June 1588 the duke invoked the storm that had just scattered the Armada as an excuse to abandon the Enterprise of England. 'If this were an unjust war, one could indeed take this storm as a sign from Our Lord to cease offending Him,' the king thundered, 'but being as just as it is, one cannot believe that He will disband it, but rather will grant it more favour than we could hope.' At this point the duke gave up his opposition and led the Armada to disaster. We do not know if Medina Sidonia later reminded Philip 'I told you so', but one of his English opponents later did it for him. According to Sir Walter Raleigh, who had helped to defeat the Armada, 'To invade by sea upon a perilous coast, being neither in possession of any port, nor succoured by any party, may better fit a prince presuming on his fortune than enriched with understanding.'[12]

Enter Dr Freud

But why, exactly, did Philip not only 'presume on his fortune' but also draw strength from his failures so that he often managed to repeat them? Although his faith in Providence clearly played a part, the king's inflexibility (and a measure of cognitive dissonance) also arose from his distinctive personality. It is usually risky for historians to psychoanalyse men and women long dead, but Philip offers a striking example of the 'obsessional' or 'obsessive-compulsive personality' – as it happens, one of the easiest types to identify. Obsessional people (and they are numerous) often display the following characteristics to a greater or lesser degree. They are

- stubborn and obstinate yet indecisive;
- inflexible and emotionally over-controlled;
- absorbed by detail yet unable to delegate;
- hard-working and industrious yet not necessarily very efficient;
- religious and austere;
- devoted to fairness and justice, but often in a rigid way;
- humourless and opposed to change.

This biography offers countless examples of Philip exhibiting all these characteristics, and many more could be provided. All reinforced the king's inflexiblity in the face of failure.

Obsessional people also share a number of other personal characteristics that are harder to document. They usually

- hate dirt and keep themselves very clean;
- love routine, order and punctuality;
- enjoy collecting but are often mean and reluctant to part with their possessions;
- have a low sexual drive and are little attracted to the opposite sex.

In Philip's case, evidence for these subjective attributes is also copious. On the first, the king's valet Jehan Lhermite noted that Philip 'was by nature the most clean, neat and tidy person that has ever lived on this earth, to such an extent that he could not tolerate without annoyance a single tiny spot on the walls and floor of his apartments'. On the second, Lhermite commented that clocks 'completely controlled the life of the good king, because they regulated and measured his life, dividing it by the minute, determining his daily actions and occupations' (chapter 6). A good example of the third characteristic – meanness – occurred in 1571, when he sought a jewel to send to Mary Queen of Scots. Instead of giving her a precious stone from his own collection, Philip ordered an official to 'send here the ones that belonged to the prince' Don Carlos. Then, after checking through his late son's jewel collection, Philip selected a fine ruby set in a ring and sent that to Mary Stuart.[13] Finally, although the king engaged in at least one illicit liaison as a teenager, after he turned 20 he seems to have shown limited interest in sex.

The causes of the obsessional personality remain unclear. Sigmund Freud attributed it to over-strict toilet training (and therefore termed it the 'anal personality'), but it more likely develops through over-strict upbringing. Philip's childhood was certainly closely regimented: as he was their sole male heir, his parents could scarcely avoid a cloyingly protective attitude towards him – especially after the death of both his brothers in infancy. The empress panicked every time her remaining children, and especially Philip, suffered the slightest illness; and although she died in 1539, and although Charles V was often absent, his governor Don Juan de Zúñiga micromanaged every moment of the prince's life, determining exactly what he could and could not do (including when he could and could not sleep with his first wife, María Manuela). Moreover, even when absent, Charles set no ordinary paternal standards for his son to live up to: the emperor was an apparently decisive man of action and the victor of numerous campaigns; an instinctive leader and cosmopolitan traveller fluent in five languages; a master of the adroit phrase and gesture, equally at ease in the harsh glare of public ceremonies or the unbuttoned company of his intimates. Yet this heroic ruler had only one legitimate son to inherit and govern his vast empire and Philip's long apprenticeship, which lasted from 1543 until Charles's death in 1558, heightened the young man's awareness of the need for success and of the disgrace of failure. He was thus saddled with a crushing

psychological burden of self-expectation, and a daunting compulsion to prove himself worthy of his father and of his mission. Sir John Elliott was surely correct to see 'the heavy burden, not only political but also psychological and spiritual, of his dynastic heritage' as the key to his personality.[14]

Not surprisingly, Philip came to harbour a deep insecurity about his capacity to play the public role expected of him by society, by his family and by himself; and, long after the death of both his parents, his lack of self-esteem continued to surface in unexpected ways. In 1563, aged 35, when his plan to lay the foundation stone of San Lorenzo de El Escorial ran into difficulties, Philip declared 'I'm totally confused' and 'I'm ready to entrust it to the nuncio and not go myself'. On this occasion, he eventually overcame his insecurity and participated; but three years later, just after the birth of his first daughter, he became so anxious about carrying the baby in his arms to the font that he practised, 'walking from one side of his room to the other with a large doll in his arms', only to delegate the task to his brother Don John (page 162).[15]

Whatever its causes, people with obsessional personalities are poorly equipped to serve as war leaders because directing hostilities demands efforts of such magnitude that it leaves few reserves of energy or insight to deal with other problems. This limitation assumed a special importance in the case of Philip, since he spent all but six months of his reign fighting his enemies, sometimes several at the same time. In the early years, to be sure, the king allowed his lieutenants a measure of discretion. 'We have decided to refer this matter to you, as the person who is on the spot and can see what is best for the service of God and ourselves,' he informed his viceroy of New Spain in 1557 concerning the settlement of Florida. He even delegated (albeit with great reluctance) the decision on whether or not to invade England in 1571 to the sceptical duke of Alba: 'You must guide and direct this according to what you see as best for the service of God and ourselves: I entrust it to your hands, with great confidence that you will act with the zeal, care and prudence that such an important matter requires.'[16] This flexibility disappeared in the 1580s. Instead, Philip forbade the marquis of Santa Cruz, a fighting admiral with a lifetime of experience, to depart from the detailed instructions he had prepared for the Enterprise of England. The marquis must 'believe me, as one who has complete information on the present state of affairs in all areas' and follow his orders without the least deviation.

The king deluded himself. Even though his information network was the best available, by the time each piece of news reached his desk, the 'present state of affairs' would have changed. This delusion displayed an alarming failure to grasp the immense complexity involved in any major 'combined operation'; worse, it fatally exacerbated Philip's messianic imperialism. When

Santa Cruz objected to 'the risk incurred by sending a major fleet in winter through the Channel without a safe harbour', the king responded loftily that 'since it is all for His cause, God will send good weather'.[17] This was indeed (as Sir Walter Raleigh put it), the outlook of 'a prince presuming on his fortune' rather than one 'enriched with understanding.'

Contingency and chance

No hegemony lasts for ever. Creating and preserving a global empire is always difficult – especially given the distance and fragmentation, the information overload and the absence of common institutions, language, laws and goals that characterized Philip's Monarchy. Difficult, however, does not mean impossible: the Italian political philosopher Giovanni Botero, writing around 1590, argued that the king's various dominions, although separated from one another, 'should not be deemed disconnected', because 'they are united by the sea. There is not a dominion, however distant it may be, that cannot be defended by naval force.'[18] Despite all the structural problems, and despite the king's obsessional personality, Philip came remarkably close to achieving success in his major ventures. With but a minimal rewrite of history (or, in Philip's terms, with only a 'minor miracle') the outcome could have been very different. In the case of England:

- Had Mary Tudor died in 1571, aged 55 like her father (let alone in 1585, aged 69 like her sister) instead of in 1558, aged 42, England surely would have remained faithful to both the Catholic faith and the Habsburg dynasty.
- Had Philip managed to make the journey from Brussels to London that he planned in March 1558, and persuaded Mary to recognize Elizabeth as the next sovereign, perhaps married to Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, England almost certainly would have remained Catholic and pro-Habsburg.
- Finally, if Philip had adopted a strategy (any strategy) for the conquest of England in 1588 that did not require the Armada to join with Parma's army before the invasion, or had a fighting admiral such as Santa Cruz been in charge, it might have secured a bridgehead in southern England or Ireland and forced Elizabeth to abandon the Dutch. This would have allowed Philip's forces to subdue the entire Netherlands, and still left abundant resources to deploy in France after the assassination of Henry III in 1589.

Similarly, in the case of the Netherlands:

- Had Philip returned at any point between 1561 (when opposition to the new bishoprics scheme united his opponents) and 1571 (when economic

recession and Alba's oppressive regime made a new rebellion highly likely), the wars might have been entirely avoided.
- Had Alba accepted the terms offered by Haarlem at the end of 1572, instead of insisting on unconditional surrender, the other rebellious towns might have sought terms, ending the revolt (an outcome that even William of Orange considered inevitable).

In each of these counterfactual scenarios, avoiding the drain of prolonged wars on Philip's treasury would have enabled him either to intervene more effectively elsewhere or to use his prodigious resources to develop the economic and cultural life of Spain.

Other minimal rewrites of history might likewise have allowed Philip to achieve more of his goals. Above all, had either Sebastian of Portugal or Henry III of France not met with violent deaths while childless, Philip could have continued to benefit from their incompetence, or could have exploited further royal minorities if they had left young heirs. Either outcome would have improved the overall security of Philip's own Monarchy, because his enemies would have lacked the incentive to form a coalition against what they perceived as a Spanish bid for European mastery.

Each minimal rewrite would surely have produced dramatic consequences, because Philip already held so many advantages. The resources at his disposal, human and material, grew prodigiously in both Europe and America throughout his reign; and so did the king's ability to mobilize them. The resources of his opponents, by contrast, dwindled. England was ruled by a woman who (although an adroit politician) lacked a clear successor, had limited revenues which she disposed of, and needed to accommodate a large and discontented religious minority; Germany's Protestant and Catholic rulers refused to cooperate with each other, causing constitutional paralysis in the Holy Roman Empire; France dissipated its vast resources in religious wars; the Ottoman sultans became bogged down in a war against Persia. Moreover, rarely was the view from the Escorial totally bleak: failure in one of Philip's enterprises often coincided with success in another. Thus in 1571–2, beside the failure of his plan to 'kill or capture Elizabeth', his humiliating retreat over Finale, and the resurgence of revolt in the Netherlands, Philip could proudly set the resounding victory of Lepanto, the birth of a healthy heir and the massacre of St Bartholomew. Against the losses in the Netherlands he could set the annexation of Portugal and the expansion of his power in America and the Philippines. Fortune (or, as he would have said, God) often smiled on Philip and pulled victory from the jaws of defeat. Thus in 1565, some months before he heard that French Huguenots had created a colony in Florida, Philip signed a contract authorizing Pedro Menéndez de Avilés to assemble and arm a fleet for service

in the Caribbean. This allowed the king's forces to destroy the settlers before they had established a defensible base. Likewise, between 1577 and 1584, the sultan renewed a truce in the Mediterranean four times, allowing Philip to mobilize the resources necessary to annex Portugal and the Azores, and to reconquer the South Netherlands, without fearing a stab in the back. Finally, in 1591 the revolt of Aragon broke out just after Philip had raised an army to intervene in southern France, allowing him to deploy this force to crush the uprising within a week.

These 'alternative histories' take us to the heart of the enigma of Philip II. To return to the extended simile of Dr Aguilar de Terrones: if the duties of a king resembled those of a weaver, then Philip's failure to achieve more of his dynastic and confessional goals stemmed not from the structure of his loom, the texture of his cloth, or the fragility of its individual threads, but rather from the limitations of the weaver. 'Such a busy life, divided into so many threads' did indeed require the king 'to do so much in so short a time' – and he simply could not keep it up. Perhaps a final visit to San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial helps to explain why. The king was inordinately proud of its construction, and so by using it to assess his achievements we are choosing a metric that Philip himself would have welcomed.

First we must salute the astonishing overall achievement: one of Europe's largest buildings was conceived, constructed and completed in a single generation – and yet, as Fray José de Sigüenza (author of the first history of the complex) boasted, 'the edifice does not appear to have been built of different elements, but rather made out of a single rock on account of the great uniformity of colour, grain and juxtaposition of its stones'. Even foreigners considered the complex 'the most magnificent palace of all Europe' (John Eliot, 1593); 'superior to any other building now existing in the world' (Venetian ambassador, 1602); 'the greatest and best laid out structure in Europe' (the ambassador of Lucca, 1618).[19] But such perfection came at a high cost. The same Venetian ambassador noted that construction 'has taken thirty-five years of continuous work and over ten millions in gold'. Sigüenza, however, asked pointedly: did those ducats 'go up in smoke or end up outside Spain? No.' Instead, he noted, most of the money went to 'officials in Toledo, who supported their households and families', and 'to the workers in Galapagar, Robledo and Valdemorillo' who 'hewed a rock, carried some stones, made some brick, dug some soil, and transported them' all to El Escorial. These 'trickle-down' economic benefits led Sigüenza puckishly 'to wish that our kings would undertake even bigger projects than this one' instead of spending their money abroad.[20]

Sigüenza's proto-Keynesian economic analysis nevertheless omitted the opportunity costs inherent in the hours that Philip devoted to this project. Examples abound in this book: he got out his scissors to excise from a letter the

description of some sin committed by a novice at the monastery; he personally allocated the cell to be occupied by each friar; he visited 'the quarries where the stones were cut to watch them be loaded and unloaded' in person so 'he could see everything for himself'; he demanded that a 'model of the choir stalls' be brought all the way to him in Badajoz, so he could check that it conformed to the design he had chosen. He never relinquished this microscopic control: in 1590, his anxiety 'to locate the crucifix' correctly in the basilica 'involved His Majesty going up and down the stairs two thousand times'. The process took six days.[21] Every hour that Philip devoted to such details while seated at his 'loom of state' compromised his ability and drained his energy to 'run and fix' any thread that broke.

As the papal nuncio in Spain complained in 1587, 'His Majesty wants to see and do every single thing himself, yet that would not be possible even if he had ten hands and as many heads'. So although his inflexible faith played an important part in preventing the king from attaining his goals, equally critical were the obsessive complexes created by his upbringing and his inability (in the words of Don Juan de Silva) to make 'some division between those [affairs] that he should deal with himself and those that he cannot avoid delegating to others'.[22] This combination undermined Philip's ability to deal with the deluge of problems that inevitably confronted the ruler of fifty million subjects in a global monarchy almost constantly at war. No one could excel as both clerk of works for the Escorial and as a world statesman. The very skill sets that equipped Philip so superbly for the first task, allowing him to produce 'the Eighth Wonder of the World', fatally compromised his ability to succeed at the second, as ruler of the first empire in history on which the sun never set.

Abbreviations

AA	Archivo de la Casa de los Duques de Alba, Biblioteca de Liria, Madrid, with *caja* and folio
ACA	Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó, Barcelona
CA	*Consell d' Aragó*
ACC	*Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, 17 vols (Madrid, 1861–91)
ACP	Archivo de los Condes de Puñonrostro, Carmona
Bobadilla	*Papeles de Don Francisco de Bobadilla*
ADE	*Archivo Documental Español: Negociaciones con Francia*, ed. M. Gómez del Campillo, 11 vols (Madrid, 1950–64)
AGI	Archivo General de Índias, Seville
IG	*Indiferente General*
AGNM	Archivo General de la Nación, México
CRD	*Cédulas reales duplicadas*
AGPM	Archivo General del Palacio Real, Madrid, Sección histórica
CR	*Cédulas reales*
AGRB	Archives Générales du Royaume/Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels
Audience	*Papiers d'État et d'Audience*
Gachard	*Collection Gachard*
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
CC	*Cámara de Castilla*
CJH	*Consejos y Juntas de Hacienda*
CSR	*Casas y Sitios Reales*
DGT Inv	*Dirección General del Tesoro, Inventario*
Estado	*Negociación de Estado*
GA	*Guerra Antigua*
PR	*Patronato Real*
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
Consejos	*Consejos Suprimidos*
Inq	*Inquisición* (with *legajo* or *libro* and folio)
OM	*Órdenes Militares*
AHPM	Archivo Histórico de Protocolos, Madrid
Álava	*Don Francés de Álava y Beamonte. Correspondencia inédita de Felipe II con su embajador en París (1564–1570)*, ed. P. and J. Rodríguez (San Sebastián, 1991)
AM	Archivo Municipal
AMAE (M)	Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Madrid
AEESS	*Archivo de la Embajada Española cerca la Santa Sede*
AMAE (P)	Archive du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris
MDFDE	Mémoires et documents: Fonds Divers, Espagne
APC	*Acts of the Privy Council*
ARA	Algemene Rijksarchief, The Hague
ARSI	Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome
ASC	Archivo de la Casa de los Marqueses de Santa Cruz, Madrid, with *caja* and *expediente*

ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
DU	*Ducato di Urbino, Clase I*
MP	*Mediceo del Principato*
ASG	Archivio di Stato, Genoa,
AS	*Archivio Segreto*
ASMa	Archivio di Stato, Mantua
AG	*Archivio Gonzaga*
ASMo	Archivio di Stato, Modena
CD	*Cancellaria Ducale, Sezione Estero*
ASN	Archivio di Stato, Naples
AST	Archivio di Stato, Turin
LM	*Lettere Ministri*
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Rome
LP	*Lettere principi*
NS	*Nunziatura Spagna*
ASVe	Archivio di Stato, Venice
SDS	*Senato: Dispacci Spagna*
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome
UL	*Urbinates Latini*
VL	*Vaticani Latini*
BCR	Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome
BL	British Library, London, Department of Western Manuscripts
Addl.	*Additional Manuscripts*
Cott.	*Cotton Manuscripts*
Eg.	*Egerton Manuscripts*
BMB	Bibliothèque Municipale, Besançon
Ms Granvelle	*Cabinet des Manuscrits, Collection de Granvelle*
BMO	*La batalla del Mar Océano*, ed. J. Calvar Gross, J. I. González-Aller Hierro, M. de Dueñas Fontán and M. del C. Mérida Valverde, 3 vols (Madrid, 1988–93)
BNE *Ms*	Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, Sección de Manuscritos
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Section des Manuscrits
f. f.	*Fonds français*
Ms. Esp.	*Manuscrit espagnol*
Bouza, *Cartas*	*Cartas de Felipe II a sus hijas*, ed. F. J. Bouza Álvarez (2nd edn, Madrid, 1998)
BPU	Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Geneva
Favre	*Collection Manuscrite Édouard Favre*
BR *Ms*	Biblioteca Real, Palacio de Oriente, Madrid, Sección de Manuscritos
BRB *Ms*	Bibliothèque Royale/Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Brussels, Section des Manuscrits/Afdeling Handschriften
BSLE *Ms*	Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Manuscript Collection
BZ	Biblioteca de Zabálburu, Madrid, Manuscript Collection (with *carpeta* and folio)
Cahiers van der Essen	Notebooks ('Cahiers') of Léon van der Essen containing transcripts of materials in the Archivio di Stato, Naples, subsequently destroyed
CCG	*Correspondance du Cardinal de Granvelle 1565–1586*, ed. E. Poullet and C. Piot, 12 vols (Brussels, 1877–96)
CDCV	*Corpus Documental Carlos V*, ed. M. Fernández Álvarez, 5 vols (Salamanca, 1974–81)
CMPG	*Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II*, ed. L. P. Gachard, 3 vols (Brussels, 1867–81)
CMPT	*Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche avec Philippe II*, ed. J. S. Theissen and H. A. Enno van Gelder, 3 vols (Utrecht, 1925–42)
CODOIN	*Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, 112 vols (Madrid, 1842–95)
CODOIN América	*Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españoles en América y Oceanía*, 42 vols (Madrid, 1864–84)
CSPSp	*Calendar of State Papers: Spanish*, ed. J. A. Bergenroth and others, 19 vols (London, 1862–1954); and *Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English affairs preserved in, or originally belonging to, the archives of Simancas: Elizabeth*, ed. M. A. S. Hume, 4 vols (London, 1892–9)

CSPV	*Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice*, ed. H. F. Brown and others, 38 vols (London, 1864–1947)
DH	*Fray Bartolomé Carranza. Documentos históricos*, ed. J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, 7 vols (Madrid, 1962–94)
DHME	*Documentos para la historia del monasterio de San Lorenzo El Real de El Escorial*, ed. J. Zarco Cuevas, G. de Andrés and others, 8 vols (Madrid, 1917–62)
Donà	*La corrispondenza da Madrid dell' ambasciatore Leonardo Donà (1570–1573)*, ed. M. Brunetti and E. Vitale, 2 vols (Venice–Rome, 1963)
Douais	*Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roi Charles IX en Espagne, 1565–72*, ed. C. Douais, 3 vols (Paris, 1896–1904)
Encinas	*Cedulario Indiano recopilado por Diego de Encinas* (1596), ed. A. García Gallo, 4 vols (Madrid, 1945–6)
Epistolario	*Epistolario del III duque de Alba*, ed. duke of Berwick y Alba, 3 vols (Madrid, 1952)
FBD	*Felipe II. La biografía definitiva*, by G. Parker (Barcelona, 2010)
FCDM *AH*	Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Toledo, *Archivo Histórico*
Gachard, *Voyages*	*Collection des voyages des souverains des Pays-Bas*, ed. L. P. Gachard, IV (Brussels, 1882)
GCP	*Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas*, ed. L. P. Gachard, 5 vols, (Brussels 1848–79)
GPGP	*Gonzalo Pérez, secretario de Felipe II*, by A. González Palencia, 2 vols (Madrid, 1946)
GRM	*Retraite et mort de Charles-Quint au monastère de Yuste. Lettres inédites*, ed. L. P. Gachard, 3 vols (Brussels, 1854–6)
Groen van Prinsterer	*Archives ou correspondance inédite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, ed. G. Groen van Prinsterer (1st series, 8 vols and supplement, Leiden 1835–47; 2nd series, I, Utrecht, 1857)
HHSTA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna
HSA *Altamira*	Hispanic Society of America, New York, Manuscript collection, *Altamira Papers*, with box, folder and document
IANTT	Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais, Torre do Tombo, Lisbon
TSO: CG	*Tribunal do Santo Oficio: Conselho Geral*
IVdeDJ	Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, Madrid, Manuscripts (with *envío, carpeta* and folio)
KB *HS*	Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Afdeling Handschriften
KML	Karpeles Manuscript Library, Santa Barbara, California
MSP: CR	*Medina Sidonia Papers: Cartas de reyes*
Lhermite, *Passetemps*	Jehan Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*, ed. C. Ruelens, E. Ouverleaux and J. Petit, 2 vols (Antwerp, 1890–6, facsimile reprint, Geneva, 1971)
Longlée	*Dépêches diplomatiques de M. de Longlée, résident de France en Espagne, 1582–90*, ed. A. Mousset (Paris, 1912)
Maura	*El designio de Felipe II y el episodio de la Armada Invencible*, ed. G. Maura Gamazo, duke of Maura (Madrid, 1957)
MHSI	*Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*
NA	National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Kew
SP	*State Papers*
NMM	National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, Manuscript Collection
OÖLA	Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, Linz
KB	*Khevenhüller Briefbücher*
Oria	*La Armada Invencible. Documentos procedentes del Archivo General de Simancas*, ed. E. Herrera Oria (Valladolid, 1929: Archivo Histórico Español, II)
PEG	*Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle*, ed. C. Weiss, 9 vols (Paris, 1841–52)
RAG *AB*	Rijksarchief Gelderland, *Archief van het Huis Berg*
RAH	Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, Colección de Manuscritos
Riba	*Correspondencia privada de Felipe II con su secretario Mateo Vázquez 1567–91*, ed. C. Riba García (Madrid, 1959)
Serrano	*Correspondencia diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede durante el pontificado de San Pio V*, ed. L. Serrano, 4 vols (Madrid, 1914)

Sigüenza	José de Sigüenza, *La fundación del Monasterio de El Escorial*, vol. III of his *Historia del Order de San Gerónimo* (1605; Madrid, 1988)
TMLM *Ms*	The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, Manuscript Collection
TR	*El Arzobispo Carranza: 'Tiempos Recios'*, ed. J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, 4 vols (Salamanca, 2003–7)
UB Leiden *HS Pap*	Universiteitsbibliotheek, Leiden, *Afdeling Handschriften Papieren*

Note on sources

This biography draws on six major categories of primary sources, some printed but most available only in manuscript.

1. The Altamira collection

By 1860, José María Osorio de Moscoso, sixteenth count of Altamira, had inherited the archives of several noble Spanish families, creating perhaps the richest private collection of documents from the reign of Philip II. It included the papers of Philip's private secretaries: Antonio Gracían y Dantisco (1571–6), Mateo Vázquez de Leca (1573–91) and Jerónimo Gassol (d. 1605). The private secretaries handled three distinct types of documents for the king: his correspondence with senior ministers about a wide range of business; letters and memorials 'to be placed in the king's hands'; and archives left by other senior ministers when they died (starting with those of Cardinal Espinosa, whom Vázquez had served as secretary). At some point, the count-duke of Olivares (Favourite and chief minister of Philip IV) realized the importance of these papers and appropriated them. From there, they eventually passed to the counts of Altamira, where they joined the papers of several of Philip II's ministers, including Don Luis de Requesens, Don Juan de Zúñiga, the marquis of Velada and the duke of Sessa.

Disaster struck in 1869: to pay the debts of the last count, his executors auctioned off his collection of paintings, armour, relics and books, and also his archives. Luckily, the Madrid bibliophile José Sancho Rayón salvaged as much of the archives as he could. He persuaded the Basque bankers Mariano and Francisco de Zabálburu to acquire thousands of documents, and the entire collection in the Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu has been digitized, so that every folio can be consulted, enlarged, improved and (if desired) printed out in the library reading room.[1] Guillermo de Osma likewise acquired several thousand Altamira documents, which he placed in the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, which he founded in Madrid. This collection, too, has been digitized so that it is now possible to 'search' the entire collection by name, subject and date.[2] Two other people who acquired significant parts of the Altamira collection in 1870 soon transferred them abroad. Frédéric Disdier, brother-in-law of the last count, sold over 200 volumes to the British Library (then the British Museum Library) where they became *Additional Manuscripts* 28,334–28,503 and 28,262–28,264. Paul Chapuys, librarian of the last count of Altamira, took thousands more documents from the collection back to his native Geneva, and when he died they passed to a friend, who presented them to the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire of the city.[3]

Until very recently, it seemed as if these four collections contained the bulk of the Altamira papers, but Sancho Rayón had retained some 3,000 documents from the collection, and at his death in 1900 the marquis of Jerez de los Caballeros acquired not only Sancho Rayón's marvellous collection of rare books but also 'a few packets of old papers'. Two years later the marquis sold his books and the 'old papers' to the noted American Hispanist Archer M. Huntington, who deposited them in his personal vault at the Hispanic Society of America, which he had founded in New York. After Huntington's death, these items officially entered the Society's collection but remained uncatalogued until 2012, when a major grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation enabled Bethany Aram, Rachael Ball and me to sort, identify and catalogue the Society's thirty-two boxes of Altamira papers.[4]

This dispersal of the Altamira papers means that some papers have disappeared, perhaps for ever, while the rest lie scattered between five or more repositories. This creates two problems. First, the size of the surviving collection is still prodigious: Carlos Riba García published roughly half of the memoranda exchanged between Philip II and Mateo Vázquez contained in one of the 200 Altamira volumes

in the British Library, thus providing a unique flavour of the collection – but doing so filled 436 printed pages. Publishing the entire Altamira collection would therefore fill thousands of volumes.[5] Second, dispersion means that the various memoranda written by Philip II to his senior ministers on the same day are now scattered between at least five archives, even though many documents often refer to others in the collection. Thus, a letter or consulta addressed to the king may today be in Geneva, while Mateo Vázquez's cover note is in London, and Philip's rescript is in Madrid or New York. Producing a modern 'concordance' of the Altamira collection represents the most urgent task that faces historians of Philip II today.

2. Government archives

The Altamira collection contains mainly documents exchanged between Philip and his trusted advisers on matters of importance to *him:* historians must look elsewhere for his exchanges on other matters. Most consultas from the fourteen central councils that advised him, as well as the letters and reports sent to the king by his ministers around the world, are currently archived according to topic as follows:

- *Council of State* (AGS *Estado*) is organized geographically, with one series for each European country ruled by the king (Aragon, Castile, the Netherlands, Milan, Naples, Sicily and so on) or governed by others (England, France, Germany, Portugal, Rome, Savoy and so on), plus 'Armadas y Galeras' (about the Mediterranean fleet) and 'Despachos diversos' (including numerous registers of the secretary of state's outgoing correspondence).
- *Councils of Italy* (Naples, Sicily, Milan, Sardinia) from 1554–5, *Portugal* from 1582, and the Netherlands (*Flandes*) from 1588, all form part of AGS *Secretarías Provinciales*, which contains routine administrative correspondence.
- *Council of War:* AGS *Guerra Antigua* contains papers about the defence of Spain by land and sea, about the garrisons in North Africa and, after 1580, about the defence of Portugal.
- *Council of Finance:* letters and papers addressed to the king 'in the hands of his secretary of the treasury', and consultas about them, form the series AGS *Consejos y Juntas de Hacienda*. The audited accounts of those who disbursed government funds or who provided government loans will be found in four AGS series: *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas, Contaduría del Sueldo, Contadurías Generales* and *Dirección General del Tesoro*.
- *Council of the Indies:* AGI (Seville) *Indiferente General* contains many of the consultas of the council to the king.[6] The council's correspondence with viceroys and other officials in America is organized geographically (AGI *México, Perú* and so on); its judicial responsibilities form the series AGI *Justicia*.
- *Council of Castile* (Consejo Real): divided between AHN (Madrid) *Consejos Suprimidos*, AGS *Patronato Real*, AGS *Patronato Eclesiástico* and AGS *Cámara de Castilla* (the last three series that contain many important papers unrelated to the council, such as the testaments of the royal family).
- *Council of Aragon:* ACA (Barcelona) *Consejo de Aragón*.
- *Council of the Orders:* AHN *Órdenes Militares*.
- *Council of the Inquisition:* AHN *Inquisición*.[7]
- *Junta de Obras y Bosques:* divided between AGS *Casas y Sitios Reales* and AGP *Sección histórica.* (*Cédulas reales*, 2–9, contain 10,000 pages with register copies of royal warrants issued by the Junta, 1548–98.) AGS *CSR* also contains accounts for the households of members of the royal family, beginning in 1535 with the registers of Philip's household as prince: AGS *CSR* 36.

None of these series is complete. In 1559, the ship carrying the royal archive back to Spain from the Netherlands sank, destroying the records of the king's administration since he left Spain five years earlier; many important documents after 1559 form part of the Altamira collection; a few more have found their way into the wrong series.[8] Other documents were looted by the French in the nineteenth century (although, by express order of Adolf Hitler, the German occupation authorities returned almost all of these to Simancas in 1942).[9] Finally, although Philip and the archivists of Simancas sought to collect the official papers of all his councillors when they died, they did not always succeed (see section 4 below).

Starting in 1992, *Archivos Españoles en Red* has made available online tens of thousands of documents in the various public archives of Spain from the reign of Philip II, so that someone in (say) Columbus, Ohio, can locate, read and print them out, without a reader's card and without charge, even at times when the archives that hold the originals are closed.[10]

Each overseas territory governed by Philip possessed its own institutions and generated separate records, permitting historians to study the implementation of the king's policies on the periphery – but unfortunately, there too, losses have often been heavy. The archives of several institutions in Naples and Milan that contained correspondence with Philip perished in World War II, either in whole or in part;

while the Spanish institutions created in the Netherlands by the duke of Alba and his successors have left scarcely any archival trace before 1596, except for the council of Troubles (AGRB *Raad van Beroerten*). In Mexico, by contrast, two sets of documents in AGNM show how royal power functioned in a major outpost of Philip's Monarchy. The first nine volumes in the series *Mercedes* (appropriately entitled *Libros de Gobierno*) contain registered copies of apparently all the orders issued by the viceroy before 1570, many of them rehearsing the royal letter or warrant (*cédula*) demanding action. Moreover, the first three volumes of the series *Cédulas reales duplicadas* list hundreds of orders sent by Philip II to his officials, above all the viceroy and Audiencia, sometimes with a note of the action taken. The Historical Archive at Goa, capital of Portuguese India, likewise contains virtually all the letters received from Philip in the 1580s and 1590s (filed in the *Livros das Monções*); but few documents there illuminate either the execution of his orders or the policy debates in Goa on how to govern outposts that stretched from Sofala to Nagasaki during his reign.

3. The correspondence of the king with his family

Charles V and his son exchanged many letters between 1543, when Philip (as he later put it) 'began to govern', and the emperor's death in 1558; but most concerned only official business. Occasionally Charles wrote in his own hand, and he frequently added a holograph postscript, but the topics covered rarely included personal details. *CDCV* published the majority of these exchanges, with more from 1556–8 in *GRM*. There is one important exception: Charles's two secret instructions for his son in May 1543. Ms B 2955 of the Hispanic Society of America in New York contains the original of both items, covering 48 folios, all written (and heavily corrected) in the emperor's own hand – the longest documents he ever wrote. Ball and Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, provide a critical edition.

Personal details abound in the holograph letters written by Philip to his aunt Mary of Hungary, to his sister María and to her husband Maximilian, all of which survive in Vienna; in the holograph letters of his sister María to Philip (which he annotated) in the Biblioteca de Liria in Madrid; and in his correspondence with his cousin Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, and to a lesser extent with his son-in-law Charles Emmanuel of Savoy.[11] Philip explicitly referred to the letters he exchanged with his wives, but virtually nothing survives. We know that just after Mary Tudor's death he congratulated his agent in England 'for having burned all my letters to the queen', and he probably did the same when the others died. Only two personal letters from any of his wives survive, both in draft and both from Mary Tudor. Philip also wrote often to his mothers-in-law, Catherine of Portugal and Catherine de' Medici, but no one has yet compiled a list of these letters, as well as those sent to other sovereigns. Rayne Allinson calendared and analysed Philip's letters to his sister-in-law Elizabeth Tudor, two of them holograph.[12]

The most revealing family letters of the king were those sent to his daughters, Isabella Clara Eugenia (born 1566) and Catalina Michaela (born 1567). Fernando Bouza has published the 133 surviving letters written by Philip when he was separated from his daughters; and although the king burned the letters that they sent to him while he was in Portugal, he carefully kept those received from Catalina after she left Spain in 1585, as well as drafts of many of his replies.[13]

J. I. Tellechea Idígoras published all of Philip's personal correspondence with his 'spiritual father', the pope, in two series: *Felipe II y el Papado*, contains almost 500 letters written by the king in the course of his reign, many of them holograph; *El papado y Felipe II*, contains almost 550 papal briefs addressed to the king, mostly in Latin with (after 1566) some Italian holographs.

4. Papers of principal ministers

Several of Philip's ministers retained their correspondence with the king.

- *Don Juan de Zúñiga and Don Luis de Requesens*. Although the executors of both brothers followed their orders to burn sensitive papers at their death, they have left the largest private collection of 'state papers' from the reign: over 800 bundles and books of documents. Most of the papers of the brothers became part of the Altamira collection (see above).[14] In addition, most of their family papers, including those of their father, the king's governor Don Juan de Zúñiga y Avellaneda, are today in the Arxiu del Palau-Requesens in Molins de Rei.[15]
- *Cardinal Granvelle*. The cardinal died in Madrid in 1586 and left a huge archive. Most of his papers are now divided between BMB and the BR Madrid, but many other archives (notably AGS and the various parts of the Altamira collection) conserve important caches of the cardinal's letters, while AGRB *Manuscrits divers* 5459 and 5460 contain hundreds of Granvelle's memoranda to the king and members of the Junta de Noche between 1579 and 1584.[16]
- *The third duke of Alba*. Most of the extensive archive of the duke, only partly published, remains in the library of his descendants in the Palacio de Liria in Madrid.[17]
- *The seventh duke of Medina Sidonia*. Although most of the letters and papers of the seventh duke remain in the ducal archive at Sanlúcar de Barrameda, the Karpeles Manuscript Library in Santa

Barbara, California holds three volumes of *Cartas Regias* covering 1587–93 (and much other material from those years).[18]

- *The first duke of Feria:* Twenty-nine letters written entirely in Philip's hand to the count of Feria between January 1558 and May 1559 – the earliest known example of Philip's habit of 'letting off steam' by writing to his confidants – are today in the Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Toledo, *Archivo Histórico* 166 R–7.
- *Margaret of Parma and her son Alexander Farnese.* The papers left by Philip's sister and nephew have suffered a double tragedy: much correspondence ended up in the Archivio di Stato in Naples, where German soldiers burned a large part of it in 1943 – although the transcripts made by the Belgian historians Louis Prospère Gachard and León van der Essen survive. The rest of their papers, in the Archivio di Stato, Parma, suffered severe damage from damp and many documents are today difficult to read.[19]
- *Andrea and Juan Andrea Doria.* Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, published hundreds of letters sent by the king and his ministers to his principal Mediterranean admirals between 1552 and 1598. (Down to 1573, Vargas Hidalgo also printed letters and other documents sent by the Dorias to the king.)
- Philip explicitly ordered his executors to burn the letters of his confessors, Fray Diego de Chaves and Diego de Yepes, 'written by them to me, and by me to them', and apparently only three originals now survive (one from Chaves and two from Yepes) – but their aggressive tone is highly revealing (and explains why the king was so keen to destroy the rest).[20]

Three of the king's senior advisers wrote autobiographies, all available in print and all offering important insights into what it was like to work for Philip II.

- Shortly after he fled into exile after the collapse of the revolt of Aragon in 1591, Antonio Pérez published *Un pedazo de historia de lo sucedido en Zaragoza* in Pau, headquarters of Henry IV. He republished it with additions in 1592 with the title *Pedazos de historia o relaciones*, and in 1598, in Paris, shortly after learning of the death of Philip, he published a far longer version entitled *Relaciones de Antonio Pérez* together with a second volume entitled *Cartas de Antonio Pérez*. Both enjoyed great success, no doubt because they included the text of consultas exchanged with Philip that made the king seem petty, mendacious, and stupid. Unfortunately for historians, all editions contain the same defect: Pérez 'edited' many if not all of the documents he published in order to make them vindicate his claim that Philip had 'framed' him for the murder of Juan de Escobedo. Nothing published by Pérez can be trusted unless it can be independently verified.[21]
- *Don Luis de Requesens* either wrote or dictated a 'Life' that provides a candid portrait, starting with memories of growing up as the prince's playmate and senior page and ending in 1570.[22]
- *Diego de Simancas*, 'Vida y cosas notables', composed between 1577 and 1583 (when he died), offers three insights into the world of Philip II: first, he unconsciously revealed the vanity, prejudices and factions that poisoned the court; second, he provides some 'insider' accounts of meetings (down to where each councillor sat and how they cast their votes); finally, he recorded in detail his conversations with the king.[23]

In addition, *Bartolomé Carranza* worked closely with Philip in England and the Netherlands between 1554 and 1558, when he returned to Spain as archbishop of Toledo. The following year the Inquisition arrested Carranza on suspicion of heresy, and a complete transcript of his trial exists from 1559 until 1567, when Pope Pius V evoked the case to Rome. The late Professor José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras published 334 documents from the transcript, down to spring 1563. By then, the king himself and some sixty of his courtiers had made sworn depositions that not only revealed the factional strife that caused Carranza's downfall but also provided details on life at Philip's court in both England and the Netherlands, a period for which we lack many official documents.[24]

5. Diplomatic correspondence

Twelve governments maintained resident ambassadors at the court of Spain throughout the reign: the emperor, the pope, Ferrara, France, Genoa, Lucca, Mantua, Parma, Savoy, Tuscany, Urbino and Venice. In addition, England maintained a resident envoy until 1568, as did Portugal until 1580. The dispatches and reports of these diplomats fill important lacunae in the surviving government records and also provide vivid detail on the decision-makers. The dispatches of a few ambassadors have been published *in extenso:* for France, those of Laubespine (1559–62), St Sulpice (1562–5), Fourquevaux (1565–72) and Longlée (1582–91); for Venice, those of Donà (1570–3).[25] In addition, summaries of all letters from English agents at Philip's court after 1558 are available in *Calendar of State Papers Foreign: Elizabeth* (15 volumes to 1585, when the outbreak of war virtually closed the peninsula to Elizabeth's

diplomats);[26] while summaries of letters from Venetian envoys abroad (as well as the deliberations of the Senate) that contain material relating to Elizabethan England fill volumes VI to IX of the *Calendar of State Papers Venetian*.

Many other diplomatic sources are available in print. The closing 'Relations' made by each Venetian ambassador to the Senate after his tour abroad, some of them a hundred printed pages and more, have been published twice, once in a haphazard and incomplete form in the nineteenth century, and in their entirety by Luigi Firpo in a complete collection of *Relazioni* organized by country: volume VIII of Firpo's series prints the Relations delivered by all Venetian envoys at Philip's court between 1557 and 1598. Luciano Serrano printed the entire diplomatic correspondence between Rome and Madrid between 1565 and 1572; Anna Maria Voci printed many dispatches of Nuncio Niccolò Ormanetto (1572–7) concerning Don John of Austria and the Enterprise of England; Natale Mosconi did the same for many dispatches of Nuncio Cesare Speciano (1586–8), as did Tellechea Idígoras for those of Camillo Caetani (1594–8).[27]

Publication of the dispatches of the long-serving Imperial ambassador of this period, Adam Dietrichstein (1563–73) – in the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv Vienna, with more material in the Rodinný Archiv Ditrichšteinu in the Moravian State Archives at Brno – has now begun. Strohmayer, *Korrespondenz*, published the 126 surviving letters (most in German, but some in Spanish and Latin) exchanged between Dietrichstein and the Imperial court, 1563–5. Since Dietrichstein served not only as ambassador but also as governor (*ayo*) of Archdukes Rudolf and Ernest at the court of Spain, his dispatches are unusually intimate and interesting. The dispatches of his successor Hans Khevenhüller (1574–1606) remain unpublished (although most of the originals survive in Vienna, as do his own registers of outgoing letters in the Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv in Linz); but his detailed Diary has been printed in both German and in Spanish translation.[28]

As for the rest, the diplomatic dispatches in the archives of Florence (for Tuscany and part of Urbino), Genoa, Lucca, Mantua, Modena (for Ferrara), Parma, Turin (for Savoy), the Vatican (for the nuncios and also part of Urbino) and Venice remain in manuscript. So do those of French ambassador Jehan de Vivonne, seigneur de St Gouard (1572–82) and of the Portuguese ambassador Francisco Pereira who, perhaps because he was Ruy Gómez's uncle, ranks as the best-informed diplomat ever to reside at the court of Spain.[29]

6. Eyewitnesses

The king refused to write his own memoirs and after 1559 he did not commission biographies, two things that his father had done, but he allowed three eye-witness accounts of his early travels to be published:

- Philip's progress from Spain through Italy and Germany to the Netherlands in 1548–9 as minutely recorded by Vicente Álvarez (first published in 1551) and by Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella (1552). Calvete de Estrella, *El felicíssimo viaje*, ed. P. Cuenca (Madrid, 2001), reproduces both accounts, together with colour reproductions of the triumphal arches erected in Antwerp to greet the prince and other works of art commissioned to celebrate the journey.
- Andrés Muñoz, *Viaje de Felipe II a Inglaterra*, a short pamphlet originally published in Zaragoza in 1554, was reprinted by Pascual de Gayangos (Madrid, 1877) together with other pertinent documents on the reign of Philip I of England.

Eleven other people who knew Philip personally recorded considerable personal detail and anecdotes about him – even though none were published during the king's lifetime.[30] Seven were laymen – three professional historians, three court officials and a diplomat – and four were monks at El Escorial:

1. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, the king's history tutor, compiled a *Historia de Felipe II, rey de España*, covering 1556 to 1564 (first published in 1780; printed in Latin original and Spanish translation in his *Obras Completas*, IV (Pozoblanco, 1998)).
2. Juan de Verzosa, keeper of the Spanish archives in Rome, wrote *Anales del reinado de Felipe II*, covering 1554 to 1565, first published by J. M. Maestre Maestre (Madrid, 2002).
3. In 1585 Philip invited Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas to 'look into how one could write his glorious life, but after some discussion it seemed more modest to do this through a general history of the world beginning in the year 1559'. Herrera's *Historia General del Mundo del tiempo del Rey Felipe II, el Prudente*, although it started only in 1559, took over 1,000 pages to cover the rest of the reign, appearing in three volumes between 1601 and 1606. The epithet 'the Prudent' was Herrera's suggestion.[31]
4. Jehan Lhermite, a royal valet from Antwerp, maintained a *Passetemps* that covered 1587 to 1602, with several arresting drawings of courtly life (see plates 24 and 42 in this volume).
5. Luis Cabrera de Córdoba grew up at court, where his father had also served, and after 1585 he participated in some of the events he described in his *Historia de Felipe II* (Madrid, 1619, for the

period to 1583; 4 vols, Madrid, 1876, for the whole history, the second part from a copy; the whole work reprinted in 3 vols: Salamanca, 1998).

6. Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, one of the king's doctors, printed a *Eulogy* of his master in 1604 that covered almost 300 pages and included several poems (including a sonnet by Lope de Vega).

The only history of the king written by a diplomat who knew him remains unpublished:

7. In 1600 Orazio della Rena, secretary of the Tuscan embassy in Madrid, completed a eulogistic *Compendium of the life of Philip II*. His 700-page manuscript constitutes the first complete history of the Prudent King: his master, the Grand Duke, prohibited publication.[32]

The four monks of the Escorial who left written accounts all spent time with Philip:

8. Fray Juan de San Gerónimo, *Memorias*, covered 1563–92. This was published – alas without many of the illustrations in the original – in *CODOIN* VII.
9. Fray Antonio de Villacastín, *Memorias*, covered 1562–94: a short account by the master of works at San Lorenzo de El Escorial who talked to the king face-to-face on a regular basis, published in *DHME*, I, 11–96.
10. Fray Juan de Sepúlveda, 'Historia de varios sucesos y de las cosas notables que han acaecido en España, y otras naciones, desde el año de 1584 hasta él de 1603', published in *DHME*, IV. Since the surviving manuscript is poorly organized and full of errors, Julián Zarco Cuevas (the editor) rearranged it into a single chronological account. Although it is still occasionally repetitive, Sepúlveda portrayed Philip as more human than any other eyewitness (except perhaps Lhermite): in his account, the king hunts, laughs, watches plays, eats with the monks, and always shows 'remarkable curiosity' about people and things.
11. Fray José de Sigüenza, *La fundación del Monasterio de El Escorial* (volume III of his 'Historia del Orden de San Gerónimo', 1605), deals with the king's relationship with the Escorial throughout his reign, but only after 1575 was he an eyewitness of the events he described. Sigüenza clearly had access to the accounts composed by his three colleagues, whom he sometimes quoted verbatim (without acknowledgement.)

For those who crave more information, Geoffrey Parker, *Felipe II. La biografia definitive* (Barcelona, 2010), contains additional material on every aspect of the king and his world, but it does not include any documents from the Hispanic Society of America's *Altamira Collection*, which feature prominently in this volume, because they were only discovered and catalogued in 2012.

Notes

Preface

1. Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Felipe II en su aniversario', 9: 'Confieso que he pasado más tiempo con Felipe II que con ningún otro hombre, y puede decirse que le he dedicado los mejores años de mi vida.'
2. IVdeDJ 61/306, 339 and 360, and BL *Addl.* 28,350/315–26, all undated billetes exchanged between Philip and Hoyo written over the winter of 1562–3 about the 'zahorí'; García Tapia, 'El Escorial', 420–1, about the 'necesarias'(with more examples in chapter 6).
3. Gardiner, 'Prescott's most indispensable aide', 99, Gayangos to Prescott in 1843; Prescott, *History*, I, iv; Riba, 36, Philip to Vázquez, 30 May 1576; ASVe *SDS* 20/68, Lippomano to Venice, 14 Apr. 1587.
4. Ball and Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, 158, Charles to Philip, Palamos, 6 May 1543, holograph. See chapters 4 and 16 for examples of decisions that have left little or no documentary trail.
5. AGS *Estado* 153/68, 72 and 77, Velasco to Gabriel de Zayas, 27 July 1571 and 1 and 9 Aug. 1571; BL *Addl.* 28,336/76, Velasco to Cardinal Espinosa, 9 Aug. 1571. See chapter 11 for more details.
6. Voltaire, *Essai*, II, 431–2 (published in 1756); Watson, *History*, II, 408 (published in 1777).
7. Bouza, 'Felipe II sube a los cielos', 301 n. 2; Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 113.
8. Kamen, *Philip*, 320 (citing Fernand Braudel, *Mediterranean*, II, 1244). To be fair, Kamen had retreated from this extreme position by 2004, when he reviewed James Tracy's biography of Charles V: 'Historians have too easily given in to the view that the emperor was able to do very little in the face of the vast scenario facing him. Now . . . we can agree with Tracy that a great deal was in fact done: "Charles V did make a difference" ' (*Renaissance Quarterly*, LVII (2004), 242). The argument of this biography is that Philip II, too, 'did make a difference'.
9. AGS *Estado K* 1490/44, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, 22 July 1557; AGS *Estado* 146/147, Pérez to Philip and reply, and [10] Apr. 1565; IVdeDJ 44/127, Philip to Mateo Vázquez and reply, 16 Apr. 1575; Bouza, *Cartas*, 85, Philip to his daughters, 1583.
10. AHN *Consejos* 4416/101, Herrera to Don Luis de Salazar, 15 Dec. 1599, letter and image.

Chapter One: Apprenticeship, 1527–1543

1. Vilar Sánchez, *1526*, 42–3, citing a Portuguese envoy who had accompanied the bride to Seville.
2. Brewer *et al.*, *Letters and papers*, IV.2, 1127, Dr Edward Lee to Henry VIII, 30 Sep. 1526.
3. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, 'El príncipe', 886.
4. Zúñiga, *Crónica burlesca*, 141 ('El emperador y Felipito su hijo están buenos'); Rodríguez Villa, *El Emperador*, 359, Salinas to Ferdinand, Valladolid, 28 May 1527.
5. Rodríguez Villa, *El Emperador*, 363, Salinas to Ferdinand, Valladolid, 19 Aug. 1527.
6. March, *Niñez*, I, 122–3, Leonor de Castro to Charles, 15 Nov. 1530; and 46, Pedro González de Mendoza to Charles, undated but spring 1531.
7. *Ibid.*, I, 47, González de Mendoza to Charles, 15 and 30 Apr. and 20 May 1531.
8. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, 182, quoting Francisco de Encinas.
9. Rodríguez Villa, *El Emperador*, 499–500, Martín de Salinas to Ferdinand, Madrid, 14 Sep. 1530.
10. Alonso Acero and Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, 'Alá', 119 ('Mucho me aprietas, Hulano; cras me besaría la mano', based on an exchange in *La Jura de Santa Gadea*).
11. Fernández de Oviedo, *Libro de la Cámara Real del Prinçipe Don Juan*, 1–3; March, *Niñez*, I, 230, Zúñiga to Charles, Madrid, 11 Feb. 1536.

12. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, 77, quoting Francisco de Monzón, *Libro primero del espejo del prinçipe christiano* (Lisbon, 1544).
13. March, *Niñez*, I, 68–70, 72, Silíceo to Charles, 26 Nov. 1535, 25 Feb. 1536 and 19 Mar. 1540.
14. *Ibid.*, I, 227 and 230, Zúñiga to Charles, 25 Aug. 1535 and 9 Feb. 1536.
15. AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 7, 'Memoria de las cosas de oro y plata'; and Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, 101–2; March, *Niñez*, II, 344, Doña Estefania de Requesens to her mother, 28 Oct. 1537.
16. BL *Addl.* 28,354/51–2, 113, 176, marquis of Ladrada to Philip, and rescript, 25 Oct. and 23 Dec. 1570, and 5 Apr. 1571; AHN *Inq. libro* 101/695–7, Hernando Arenillas de Reynoso to Philip, 4 Dec. 1594, with rescript.
17. Gachard, 'Charles-Quint', 625n: Mary of Hungary to Charles, 9 June 1538.
18. *CDCV*, II, 32–43, Charles's Instructions to Philip, 5 Nov. 1539. All quotations come from this source.
19. March, *Niñez*, I, 249, Zúñiga to Charles, 25 June 1541.
20. *Ibid.*, I, 237, 241, 247, 259 and 261, Zúñiga to Charles, 25 Feb. and 19 May 1540, 24 Mar. 1541, 10 Sep. 1543 and 4 Feb. 1544; AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 8, unfol., payments of 23 Dec. 1540.
21. March, *Niñez*, I, 248–9, Zúñiga to Charles, 25 June 1541.
22. AGS *CSR* 106/470–1, warrant in favour of 'el bachiller Christobal de Estrella', 4 Feb. 1541.
23. AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 8/237v, records the purchase.
24. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II: la educación*, 605, report by the prince's tutor Vargas Mexía.
25. March, *Niñez*, I, 248–9, Zúñiga to Charles, 25 June 1541; Ball and Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, 151–2, Charles to Philip, 4 May 1543.
26. AGS *Estado* 393/36, Zayas to Philip and rescript, 'Good Friday' [= 17 Apr.] 1576.
27. Alonso Acero and Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero. 'Alá', 118; Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, 147–9; AGS *CSR* 36 fo 8, unfol., payment of 30 June 1544.
28. AGS *CSR* 35/22, list of musicians in the prince's chapel, 11 Sep. 1543.
29. AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 8, entry for 23 June 1540.
30. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, 154–6, on the heraldic innovations; March, *Niñez*, I, 247 and 249, Zúñiga to Charles, 24 Mar. and 25 Aug. 1541.
31. March, *Niñez*, II, 285 and 335, Doña Estefanía de Requesens to her mother, Madrid, 9 Sep. 1535.
32. BL *Cott. Ms Vespasian* C VII/171–4, 'Poder para Castilla', 1 May 1543.
33. *CDCV*, II, 86–7, 'Instrucción General', and AGS *PR* 26/83, 'La restricción del poder del príncipe', both signed by Charles in Barcelona, 1 May 1543.
34. Ball and Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, 149–53, Charles to Philip, Palamos, 4 May 1543, holograph, the source of all quotations from this document.
35. *CDCV*, II, 179, 'Bodas de Felipe'; Bouza, *Locos*, 196, quoting the chronicler Alonso de Santa Cruz; March, *Niñez*, I, 262–3, Zúñiga to Charles, 4 Feb. 1544; and Bouza, *Locos*, pp. 78–9, Don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador in Portugal, to Carlos, 21 Nov. 1544.
36. Ball and Parker, *Cómo ser sey*, 154–9, Charles to Philip, Palamos, 6 May 1543, holograph, the source of all quotations from this document.
37. Fernández Álvarez, 'Las instrucciones políticas', 175, Francisco de Eraso to Philip and reply, 20 Feb. 1559; *DH*, I, 319–22, testimony given under oath by Philip, 11 Jan. 1560; BZ 144/39, Mateo Vázquez to Philip II and reply, 28 Dec. 1574.
38. March, *Niñez*, I, 255, Zúñiga to Charles, 8 June 1543; Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, 675, Tavera to Charles, 8 June 1543; March, *Niñez*, I, 304, Charles to Zúñiga, 1 May 1543; *CDCV*, II, 157, Cobos to Charles, 7 Aug. 1543 (Charles agreed on 27 Oct. 1543: Martínez Millán, *La corte*, II, 102).

Chapter Two: A Renaissance prince, 1543–1551

1. *CDCV*, II, 172–3 and 183, Charles to Philip, 27 Oct. and 15 Nov. 1543.
2. *Ibid.*, II, 189–93, Philip to Charles, 4 Feb. 1544, minute. Although it seems unlikely that the prince, still only sixteen, would have composed such a defiant letter, he signed it and no doubt sympathized with its content.
3. BNE *Ms* 10,300/116–33, Los Cobos to Charles, Aranjuez, mid-July 1544, copy.
4. Chabod, '¿Milán o los Países Bajos?', 336, Philip to Charles, 14 Dec. 1544.
5. *CDCV*, II, 300–1, Philip to Charles, 14 Dec. 1544 [misdated 24 Dec.].
6. March, *Niñez*, I, 74–5, Silíceo to Charles, 6 Aug. 1543.
7. AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 1/28v–29, various cédulas of July 1544; Édouard, *L'empire*, 29–32; Frieder, *Chivalry*, 42–8; AGS *CSR* 36 fo. 1/85–6, cédulas of 18 July and 7 Aug. 1546; Fallows, *Jousting*, 392, quoting Luis Zapata de Chaves.
8. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *La 'Librería Rica'*, 74–5.
9. March, *Niñez*, I, 321–2, Charles to Zúñiga, 24 Dec. 1544.
10. *Ibid.*, I, 323–6, Charles to Zúñiga, 17 Feb. 1545.
11. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II, la mirada*, chap. 7, on Philip's 'rebeldía juvenil'.

12. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, 1270; BR *Ms* II–587/43, from the *Tratado del príncipe instruido*, composed by Don Francisco de Gurrea y Aragón, duke of Villahermosa, around 1615.
13. *CDCV*, II, 408, Philip to Charles, Valladolid, 13 Aug. 1545.
14. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprentizaje*, 166, prints part of the document, presented to Philip in a private ceremony of investiture on 16 Sep. 1546.
15. Kamen, *Philip*, 29, Philip to Charles, 20 Dec. 1546.
16. Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, 607 (*Relación* of Vicente Álvarez).
17. All quotations from *CDCV*, II, 612–15, Charles to Philip, Augsburg, 9 Apr. 1548.
18. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 387, quoting Antonio Pérez and García de Loaysa.
19. Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, 45 (Calvete), 610 and 619 (*Relación* of Álvarez); Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariño, 'Ver y conocer', 55, 72 and 77, Ludovico Strozzi to duke of Mantua, Genoa, 1 and 9 Dec. 1548.
20. Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo viaje*, 630 (Álvarez).
21. Morel-Fatio, 'La vie', 285. See page 29 above for a criticism of Philip's jousting skills.
22. Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo viaje*, 424 (Antwerp).
23. Lanz, *Correspondenz*, III, 17, Charles to Mary of Hungary, 16 Dec. 1550.
24. IVdeDJ 55/IX/97–8, Mateo Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 17 June 1586.
25. HHStA *Spanien: Hofkorrespondenz*, Karton 1, mappe 4/23 and 27, Philip to Maximilian, 16 and 25 Sep. 1551.

Chapter Three: The changing face of empire, 1551–1558

1. *CDCV*, III, 359–69, 377–90 and 617, Philip to Charles, Toro, 27 Sep. 1551, Madrid 24 Nov. 1551 and Valladolid, 2 Sep. 1553; Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II y su tiempo*, 761, count of Buendía to Philip, 2 Sep. 1552.
2. *CDCV*, III, 420, Charles to Philip, 9 Apr. 1552.
3. *Ibid.*, 423–35, Philip to Charles, undated.
4. RAH *Salazar y Castro Ms* A–51/107v–108, Philip to Don Luis de Ávila, Monzón, 6 Oct. 1552.
5. *CDCV*, III, 579–80, Charles to Philip, 2 Apr. 1553.
6. AGS *Estado* 807/29, Charles to Philip, 30 July 1553.
7. *CDCV*, III, 636–9, and *CODOIN*, III, 451–3, Charles to Philip, 16 and 26 Dec. 1553, and 21 Jan. 1554.
8. Adams and Stephens, *Select Documents*, No. 264, 'Act for the Marriage of Queen Mary to Philip of Spain, 1554' *(1 Mary, sess. 3, c. 2. 4)*.
9. AGS *Estado* 807/36–2, 'Escriptura ad cautelam', 4 Jan. 1554.
10. *CODOIN*, III, 473–7, Mary of Hungary to Philip, 4 Feb. 1554.
11. *CDCV*, IV, 109–10, Philip's Instructions to Juana, 12 July 1554.
12. Fernández y Fernández de Retana, *España*, 344, Philip to Antonio de Rojas, *c.* 20 July 1554.
13. Malfatti, *The accession*, 141 and 144, Barahona to his uncle Antonio, in the form of a diary. Many historians have debated the language in which the spouses conversed: Barahona's eyewitness testimony settles the matter. Other details from Elder, *Copie*, sigs Aiv and Bi.
14. Muñoz, *Viaje*, 97.
15. *Ibid.*, 77–8 (Muñoz's account) and 118 (letter of Oct. 1554).
16. *CSPSp*, XIII, 2, 6, Ruy Gómez to Francisco de Eraso, 26 and 29 July 1554; BR *MS* II–2257, Francisco de Ibarra to Granvelle, 13 Apr. 1559.
17. *CSPSp*, XIII, 102, Renard to Charles, 23 Nov. 1554; and *ibid.*, 124, Mary the Queen to Charles, 20 Dec. 1554, holograph; Gachard, *Voyages*, IV, 20–1.
18. *CSPV*, VI part 1, 147–9 and 177–9, Giovanni Michiel to Venice, London, 5 Aug. and 3 Sep. 1555.
19. *APC*, V, 53, Order of 27 July 1554 – the first act of the new regime: 'Anno primo et secundo Philippi et Marie Regis et Regine'.
20. *CSPV*, VI part 1, 176 and 190, Pole to Philip, Richmond, 2 and 16 Sep. 1555, register copies. (Mary and Martha appear in St Luke's Gospel, 10: 38–42, 11: 20 and 12: 1–8.)
21. Tytler, *England*, II, 485, Memorandum of early Sep. 1555. For the council's compliance, see *APC*, V, 219–20 and 257–8, orders authorizing Admiral Howard to investigate the state of the fleet and repair defective ships (6 Jan. 1556), and to move the navy to Portsmouth and build new ships (30 Mar. 1556).
22. *DH*, III, 29–30 (question 63) and 186 (answer); Redworth, 'Matters impertinent', 606, citing Lord Pembroke to Lord Shrewsbury, Jan. 1556.
23. *DH*, II, p. 568, testimony of Carranza, 4 Sep. 1559 ('hizo él encarcelar e quemar más de 450' heretics); Duffy, *Fires of faith*, 7.
24. *DH*, III, 23, testimony of Carranza; and 185, sworn testimony of Philip in the Carranza trial, 14 Oct. 1562.

25. GRM *Introduction*, 87, n. 1, 'Sommaire description' of the ceremony. Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (1517–86) is referred to as 'Granvelle' throughout this book.
26. GRM *Introduction*, 98.
27. *Epistolario*, I, 258, Alba to Ruy Gómez, Milan, 11 July 1555.
28. *CODOIN*, II, 430–1, Philip II to Ferdinand, 20 Nov. 1556.
29. Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, 764, Philip to Juana, 17 Sep. 1556; AGS *Estado*, 112/226–9, Juana to Philip, 21 Nov. 1556; GRM, II, 184–5, royal cédula of 28 Apr. 1557.
30. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 54–9, Instructions to Ruy Gómez, 2 Feb. 1557.
31. BL *Addl.* 28,264/10–12v, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert, Brussels, 27 July 1557, cyphered but with a holograph postcript by the king.
32. BL *Addl.* 28,264/17–19 and 26–7, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert, Cambrai, 6, 7 and 9 Aug. 1557, cyphered but with holograph postcripts by the king.
33. Tellechea Idígoras, *Carranza y Pole*, 263, Carranza to Villagarcía, 28 Aug. 1557; AGS *Estado* 153/103, Feria to Zayas, 9 Aug. 1571, the eve of the fourteenth anniversary of the battle, written at San Lorenzo de El Escorial.
34. Sigüenza, 8. See also chapter 7.
35. HSA *Altamira*, 7/VI/36, 'Traslado de una carta que Christóbal Vázquez de Ávila escribió', 30 Aug. 1557; *CODOIN*, II, 496, 'Relación' sent by Philip to Ferdinand, 29 Aug. 1557; Kamen, *Philip*, 70, Philip to Juana 2 Sep. 1557.
36. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 144; Verzosa, *Annales*, pp. 62–3.
37. AGS *Estado K* 1490/78, Philip to Charles, 28 Aug. 1557.
38. AGS *Estado K* 1490/98, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert, Brussels, 21 Oct. 1557.
39. AGS *Estado* 128/326 Charles to Philip, Yuste, 15 Nov. 1558, with a holograph postscript; and 317, 'Relación de cartas del emperador a Su Magestad.' Eraso endorsed both documents
40. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 116–17, Philip to Lord Wentworth, Brussels, 2 Jan. 1558.
41. Tellechea Idígoras, *Carranza y Pole*, 268–9, Carranza to Villagarcía, 20 Jan 1558. The 'engraved on my heart' story first appeared in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* of 1563 – a hostile source, to be sure, but it has a ring of truth about it.
42. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 120–1, Philip to Pole, 21 Jan. 1558, and Instruction to Feria, 28 Jan.; *ibid.*, 153, Feria to Philip, 10 Mar. 1558; and 191–4, Feria to Philip, 18 May 1558.
43. FCDM *AH* R7–5, 9 and 10, Philip to Feria, 18 Feb., 17 Mar. and 5 Apr. 1558, all holographs.
44. FCDM *AH* R7–4 and 6, Philip to Feria, 30 Jan. and 27 Feb. 1558, both holograph.
45. *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 40–3, Feria to Philip, Greenwich, 1 May 1558; FCDM, *AH* R7–12 and 13, Philip to Feria, 7 and 14 May 1558, both holograph.
46. Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, 46–7 (Philip 'very happy') and 72–3 (council debate).
47. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 269, Philip to the English commissioners, 30 Oct. 1558; Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, 101–3 (entry for 26 Oct. 1558).
48. Rodríguez Salgado and Adams. 'The count of Feria's dispatch', 319–20, Feria to Philip, 14 Nov. 1558; Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 277, Assonleville to Philip, Westminster, 7 Nov. 1558.
49. Malfatti, *The accession*, 149, Juan de Barahona to his uncle, 25 Oct. 1554; Hegarty, 'Carranza and the English universities', 160, John Jewel to Heinrich Bullinger, 20 Mar. 1559.
50. Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, 109 (entry for 12 Nov. 1558); FCDM *AH* R7–19, Philip to Feria, 25 Nov. 1558, holograph; GRM, I, 447–8, Philip to Juana, 4 Dec. 1558. Mary of Hungary died on 18 Oct. 1558.
51. *TR*, II, p. 523, Fresneda to Cardinal Caraffa, 11 Dec. 1558; FCDM *AH* R7–27, Philip to Feria, 27 Dec. 1558, holograph.
52. AGS *Estado* 128/340, Philip's comment to Francisco de Eraso on the dorse of a letter from Mary of Hungary dated 10 May 1558.
53. AGS 29/35 Codicil signed by Philip, Ghent, 5 Aug. 1559.

Chapter Four: The king at work

1. Although this chapter contains examples from the whole reign, it focuses on the period before 1580; after that the king changed his administrative style. Chapter 16 focuses on the later part of the reign.
2. Paris, *Négociations*, 49, bishop of Limoges to the cardinal of Lorraine and the duke of Guise, Ghent, 27 July 1559; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 670, Notes by Donà, 1574; Iñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, fo. 15, sermon by Dr Aguilar de Terrones, 19 Oct. 1598.
3. FCDM *AH*, R7–10, Philip to Feria, 5 Apr. 1558, holograph; AGS, *Estado* 527/5, Philip to Gonzalo Pérez, with replies, 24–25 Mar. 1565; IVdeDJ 53/VI/51, and BZ 142/9, Philip to Mateo Vázquez, with replies, 15 May 1577 and 29 Nov. 1578.
4. Álvarez-Nogal and Chamley, 'Debt policy', 192.

5. McNamara, *In retrospect*, xvii.
6. HSA *Altamira* 1/I/4, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, undated but 1578.
7. NA *SP* 70/136/38, Henry Cobham to Lord Burghley, Madrid, 14 Nov. 1575; ASVe *SDS* 20/68, Lippomano to the Doge of Venice, 14 Apr. 1587; Birch, *Memoirs*, 82, Anthony Standen to Lord Burghley, 8 Sep. 1592.
8. RAH *Salazar y Castro Ms* A–1/107v–108, Philip to Don Luis de Ávila, Monzón, 6 Oct. 1552; HSA *Altamira* 1/I/40, Bernardo de Bolea, vice-chancellor of Aragon, to Philip, undated but 1572; BL *Addl*. 28.262/599–601, Antonio Pérez to Philip and reply (undated, but 1577); Muro, *La princesa*, Appendix 36, Pazos to Philip, with rescript, 12 May 1579; AHN *Inq. libro* 249/534v–535, Philip to the bishop of Cartagena, 9 Mar. 1588, register copy.
9. BL *Addl.* 28,399/20, Philip to viceroy of Sicily, 20 Jan. 1559.
10. Escudero, *Felipe II*, 459–60; TMLM *Ms* 12,9960, Antonio Pérez to Philip, and reply, 30 Nov. 1574; BL *Eg.* 1506/92–4, Quiroga to Philip, and replies, 15 and 19 Nov. 1578.
11. IVdeDJ 55/XI/ 149–150, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 4 Aug. 1588; BL *Addl.* 28,262/137, Philip to Antonio Pérez, 12 Feb. 1577.
12. BL *Addl.* 28,263/7, undated Philip memorandum (first two examples); Escudero, *Felipe II*, 477; and IVdeDJ 55/X/181, Philip to the duke of Albuquerque, Oct. 1587, draft; AHN *Inq. libro* 284/107, Quiroga to Philip, and reply, 21 Apr. 1577.
13. *DH*, III, 404–5, testimony by Philip, 13 Oct. 1562 (Carranza case); BL *Addl.* 28,263/432, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 11 Aug. 1587 (Miguel de Piedrola, a Plaza Prophet).
14. IVdeDJ 53/3/65 and 51/170, Philip to Vázquez, with rescripts, 8 June 1574 and 20 July 1575; IVdeDJ 56, paquete 6–2, unfol., Hernando de Ávalos to Vázquez, with royal apostil, 25 Mar. 1576.
15. HSA *Altamira* 1/III/7, Philip toVázquez, Madrid, 18 Nov. 1573. Philip's confusion on the subject should not surprise us: even economists and economic historians today cannot agree about the king's fiscal situation: compare (for example) the incompatible analyses published early in 2014 by Álvarez-Nogal and Chamley, 'Debt policy', and Drelichman and Voth, *Lending*.
16. IVdeDJ 53/4/169 and 53/3/76, BL *Addl.* 28,699/103, and Riba, 105–6, Philip to Vázquez, and replies, 12 Sep. 1575, 26 July 1574, and 22 and 23 Apr. 1577.
17. BZ 144/11, Vázquez to Philip, 20 May 1574. HSA *Altamira* 5/1/13 'Señor Maximiliano' of Austria to Jerónimo Gassol, 27 Dec. 1586.
18. HSA *Altamira* 5/III/17, Vázquez to Juan Fernández de Espinosa, 12 Jan. 1586; BNF *Ms. Esp*. 132/179–80, Pérez to Juan de Vargas Mexía, 26 Jan. 1579; Oria, 152, Idiáquez and Moura to Medina Sidonia, 22 Feb. 1588; BL *Addl*. 28,377/110v, Poza to Moura, 7 Sep. 1595.
19. TMLM *Ms* 129961, Philip to Vázquez, 3 Oct. 1578; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 105–7 and 286–8, 'Juicio sobre Felipe II' by Caetani, Madrid, 13 Sep. 1598.
20. Paris, *Négocations*, 558–60, Memorial of the French ambassador in Spain, 26 Sep. 1560.
21. Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, 199–201, 'Vida y cosas notables' of Dr Diego de Simancas. Simancas was right: Quiroga had indeed boosted Pazos, someone almost unknown to the king: AHN *Inq. libro* 284/71–2, Quiroga to Philip, and reply, 4 Mar. 1577.
22. BL *Addl.* 28,399/20, Philip to the viceroy of Sicily, 20 Jan. 1559, copy (apparently the first use of the technique); BZ 141/108, Philip to Mateo Vázquez, 1 May 1586 (the 'offender' was the viceroy of Navarre).
23. Escudero, *Felipe II*, 531–2, Gassol to Philip and rescript, 14 Nov. 1594.
24. BZ, 144/33, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 6 Dec. 1574; IVdeDJ, 51/17, Philip to Vázquez, 17 July 1573; IVdeDJ, 21/716, royal apostil on a letter of Fray Antonio de San Pablo to Vázquez, 17 Nov. 1581.
25. Donà, 350, letter to Venice, 23 Aug. 1571; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 669.
26. GCP I, 358, Pérez to Tomás de Armenteros, 30 May 1565; AA 56/63, Zayas to Alba, 30 June 1567.
27. Paris, *Négociations*, 66, bishop of Limoges to Francis II, 4 Aug. 1559.
28. MHSI, *Borgia*, III, 482, Borja to Philip, 5 May 1559; AGS *Estado*, 148/181, count of Chinchón to the governor of Lombardy, 12 Dec. 1566; AA 44/81–3, Dr Juan Milio to Juan de Albornoz, 12 June 1571; Douais, II, 88, Fourquevaux to Catherine de Médici, 6 July 1569.
29. IVdeDJ 81/1251, Requesens to Zúñiga, Nov. 1572. See Janis, *Groupthink*, on the costs of administrative practices like those fostered by Espinosa.
30. AMAE (P) *MDFDE* 239/126–35, Philip to Don Diego de Covarrubias (undated but Oct. 1572), copy; Secret Instruction of Charles to Philip, 6 May 1543 (chapter 1).
31. BZ 144/1, Vázquez to Philip, undated but Mar. 1573.
32. *DHME*, V, 57 and 81 ('Diurnal' entries for 7 Oct. 1572 and 5 Mar. 1573); Poole, 'The politics of *Limpieza de Sangre*', 382.
33. BZ 144/16 and 141/9, and BL *Addl.* 28,263/222, Philip to Mateo Vázquez, 6 Nov. 1574, 24 July 1577 and 14 Apr. 1579.
34. Calculations by Rodríguez Salgado, 'The Court', 226, from the 'Diurnal' kept by Antonio Gracián.

35. BZ 44/116–17, and HSA *Altamira* 1/I/4, Vázquez to Philip, and replies, 28 Feb., 3 Mar. 1575 and undated but 1578.
36. *DHME*, V, 42, 81 and 89 ('Diurnal' entries for 11 July 1572, 5 Mar. and 5 Apr. 1573 respectively; BZ 141/11, Philip to Vázquez, 25 June 1577.
37. *CCG*, IV, 558, Granvelle to Morillon, 11 May 1573; AA *Montijo caja* 34–1/72, Granvelle to duke of Villahermosa, 13 July 1576.
38. BR *Ms*. II–2291, unfol., Pérez to Granvelle, 16 Apr. 1560; Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 1st series I, 426, Chantonnay, Spanish ambassador in Vienna, to Granvelle, 6 Oct. 1565.
39. Paris, *Négociations*, 562, mémoire of 26 Sep. 1560; Douais, II, 338, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 31 Mar. 1571; and Binchy, 'An Irish ambassador', 371, quoting the cardinal of Como to Nuncio Ormanetto, 2 July 1577.
40. BR *Ms* II–2291/224-5, Córdoba to Granvelle, 3 Sep. 1560; Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 100–1, Córdoba to Alba, 1 Feb. 1571; AA 32/42, Córdoba to Prior Don Hernando de Toledo, 4 Aug. 1574.
41. BL *Addl.* 28,350/233, and IVdeDJ 61/130, Philip to Hoyo, secretary of the Junta de Obras y Bosques, Dec. 1565 and Apr. 1567.
42. *DHME*, V, 100.
43. AHN *Inq. libro* 100/242, Philip to Quiroga, 1 Sep. 1574, holograph; IVdeDJ, 51/49, Philip to Vázquez, 30 Aug. 1575.
44. IVdeDJ 61/19, Hoyo to Philip and reply, 22 May 1562; BZ 144/34, Philip to Vázquez, 10 Dec. 1574.
45. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 669 (Donà); *CCG*, XI, 272, Granvelle to Margaret of Parma, 21 Sep. 1584; ASV *NS* 19/192, Novara to Rusticucci, 3 May 1587.
46. BCR *Ms* 2417/39, Silva to Esteban de Ibarra, 13 Aug. 1589.
47. Sánchez, *El monasterio de El Escorial*, 207–9, letters from the prior of El Escorial, 27 Aug. and 8 Sep. 1572.
48. Escudero, *Felipe II*, 457 n. 1051, quoting a 'Relación' of Baron Dietrichstein, ambassador at Philip's court 1563–72; Donà, 319, letter to Venice, 3 July 1571.
49. Riba, 105–6, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 23 Apr. 1577; IVdeDJ 68/286, Vega to Philip II and rescript, 22 Aug. 1583.
50. BL *Addl.* 28,263/34, IVdeDJ 51/ 178, and Escudero, *Felipe II*, 574, Philip to Vázquez, 23 May 1576, 6 May 1578, and 3 Apr. 1574.
51. ARSI *Epistolae Hispaniae* 143/293–294v, holograph report by Acosta, 16 Sep. 1588.
52. Donà, 39–40 and 198, letters to Venice, 6 June 1570 and 4 Feb. 1571.
53. NA *SP* 70/143/29, Sir John Smythe to Walsingham, 5 Feb. 1577; IVdeDJ 53/5/15, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 27 Jan. 1576; Donà, 677–81, letter to Venice, 17 Apr. 1573; IVdeDJ 60/96, Philip to Pérez, undated but also 17 Apr. 1573.
54. Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, 198; Mosconi, *La nunziatura*, 16–17, Novara to Rusticucci, 18 Oct. 1586.
55. Douais, II, 18 and 21, letters to Charles IX and Catherine de Medici, 18 Nov. 1568; Donà, 393–4, letter to Venice, 26 Nov. 1571.
56. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 257, Lorenzo Priuli in 1576; Sigüenza, 57.

Chapter Five: The king and God

1. TMLM *Ms* 129978, Secret Instructions for Don John of Austria, 23 May 1568, draft corrected by Philip (slightly different from the text in Van der Hammen, *Don Juan de Austria*, fos 4–44).
2. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 130.
3. *DHME*, II, p. 47, Codicil of 23 Aug. 1597.
4. *DHME*, V, 37–8, Gracián's 'Diurnal' for 10 June 1572.
5. BL *Addl.* 28,263/105–6, Vázquez to Philip and rescript, San Lorenzo, 6 Apr. 1577; Sigüenza, 71.
6. IVdeDJ 55/IX/111, Philip to Mateo Vázquez, 26 July 1586; BZ 143/6 and 141/84, same to same, 4 Jan. 1588 and 19 Feb. 1586.
7. ASVe *SDS* 12/44 and 74, Giovanfrancesco Morosini to the Doge of Venice, Madrid, 12 Aug. 1579 and 8 Feb. 1580; Sigüenza, 92 and 158. For the arrest of Don Carlos, see chapter 10; for that of Pérez, see chapter 14.
8. AGS *Estado* 153/54, Gracián to Zayas, 9 Aug. 1571; IVdeDJ 67/287a, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 28 June 1574; Bouza, *Cartas*, 65, letter to his daughters [30 Mar.] 1584.
9. *CODOIN*, VII, 366 (Memorias de San Gerónimo).
10. AGS *CC Libros de cédulas* 321/248–9, 272–5, 184–186v, 299-301, 303 ('plegarías' between 1560 and 1568); Sigüenza, 69 (Moriscos); Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 144–6 (prayer chain); BL *Eg.* 1506/16–17, Philip to Gaspar de Quiroga, bishop of Cuenca (and Inquisitor-General), 8 Mar. 1574.
11. HSA *Altamira* 1/I/46, Diego de Covarrubias, president of the council of Castile, to Philip and rescript, 11 Sep. 1577. On the decision to break the peace in the Netherlands, see chapter 13.

12. IVdeDJ 56/6/19, Vázquez to Chaves and reply, 24 June 1581; HSA *Altamira* 1/III/8, Chaves to Philip, 20 May 1587.
13. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 268–9, Chaves to Philip, 24 Oct. 1588 (about the need to investigate irregularities among the Jesuits of Spain); and Fernández, *Historia*, 278–9, same to same, 19 Mar. 1592.
14. Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo viaje*, 663 (Vicente Álvarez); HSA *Altamira* 7/VI/36, 'Traslado de una carta que Christóbal Vázquez de Ávila escribió', 30 Aug. 1557.
15. Sigüenza, 367; Estal, *Personalidad religiosa*, 159, noted 'a tooth said to belong to St Lawrence with a holograph note by Philip II attached'. See chapter 19 on Philip's reverence for relics during his final illness.
16. *PEG*, V, 643, and VI, 149, Philip to Granvelle, 24 Aug. 1559 and 7 Sep. 1560; AGS *Estado* 527/5, Philip to Gonzalo Pérez, undated [Mar. 1565].
17. BZ 166/92 and 100, rescripts on Hernando de Vega to Philip, 9 and 11 Nov. 1586 (rejoicing); chapter 10 on Fray Diego; AHN *Inq. libro* 284/107 (old fos. 96–7), Quiroga to Philip and rescript, 21 Apr. 1578; BL *Addl.* 28,262/558–9, Antonio Pérez to Philip, and rescript, undated but Oct. 1578.
18. IVdeDJ 53/3/56 and BZ 144/36, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 13 May and 11 Dec. 1574.
19. BPU *Ms Favre* 30/73v, Philip to Requesens, 20 Oct. 1573, copy of holograph original; IVdeDJ 37/155, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 22 Jan. 1576; AHN *Inq. libro* 101/325, Philip rescript to a consulta from the Suprema, 11 Jan. 1592.
20. AHN *Inq. libro* 284/81 [modern fo. 85], and BL *Eg.* 1506/94, Quiroga to Philip and rescripts, 20 Oct. 1577 and 19 Nov. 1578. See chapters 13 and 14 on the role of Quiroga in formulating the king's policy towards the Dutch.
21. AGS *Estado K* 1530/53bis, Philip to Don Diego de Zúñiga, his ambassador in Paris, 18 Sep. 1572; Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, II, 395–6, St Gouard to Charles IX, 12 Sep.1572.
22. AGS *CC Libros de cédulas* 321/248v–9, 272–5, 284–286v; González Novalín, *Historia de la Iglesia*, III–2, 21, Philip to Pius IV and his ambassador in Rome, 30 Nov. 1562; AGS *PR* 21/133, Philip's Instructions to the count of Luna, his envoy to the council, 26 Oct. 1562, holograph addition, copy.
23. Fernández Terricabras, *Felipe II*, 105, Philip to the count of Luna.
24. *Novísima Recopilación de las leyes*, I.i.13, pragmática of 12 July 1564 for Castile.
25. Fernández Terricabras, 'Philippe II', 222–3 and 230, Dr Velasco to the vice-chancellor of Aragon, 25 July 1564, and Philip II to all cathedral chapters, 4 Dec. 1564.
26. Fernández Terricabras, *Felipe II*, 123–31, Philip's instructions to his commissaries; Fernández Collado, 'Felipe II y su mentalidad reformadora', 463, Don Francisco de Toledo (the future viceroy of Peru) to Philip.
27. AGS *Estado* 897/3, Philip to Cardinal Pacheco, 1 Jan. 1565; Fernández Terricabras, 'La reforma de las Ordenes', 193, Philip to Requesens, May 1569.
28. Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 284–6, Philip to Granvelle, 10 July 1581, holograph.
29. Hinojosa, *Felipe II*, 106–7, Ambassador Vargas to Philip, 29 Dec. 1559; Astraín, *Historia*, III, 703–8, Philip to Ambassador Olivares, 9 Dec. 1588.
30. Philip's letters to Rome in favour of his nominees for benefices in Castile are registered in AHN *Consejos suprimidos: Libros de Iglesia*, 1–4.
31. AMAE (P), *MDFDE* 237/59, Philip to Olivares, 30 Sep. 1585; Cloulas, 'La monarchie catholique', provides a list of pensioners.
32. Serrano, II, 515, Requesens to Philip, 10 Dec. 1568; BCR *Ms* 2174/76v–77, Philip to Ambassador Zúñiga, 17 July 1569; and Serrano, I, 444, 'Memorial de los agravios'.
33. Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, II, 112, Philip to Gregory XIII, 10 Aug. 1580, holograph.
34. Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 284–6, Philip to Granvelle, 10 July 1581, holograph.
35. *BMO*, I, 42, Philip to Alba, 22 Jan. 1570; and 43–7, Alba to Philip, 23 and 24 Feb. 1570.
36. AA 7/58, Philip to Alba, 14 July 1571, cyphered with decrypt, received in record time on 30 July.
37. AGS *Estado* 153/68 and BL *Addl.* 28,336/70, Velasco to Zayas and to Espinosa, both on 27 July 1571; AGS *Estado* 153/72, Velasco to Zayas, 1 Aug. 1571; and *idem*, fo. 103, Feria to Zayas, 9 Aug. 1571.
38. *BMO*, 1, 57–62, Philip to Alba, 4 Aug. 1571, and reply 27 Aug. 1571.
39. *CCG*, XII, 339–41, Philip to Parma, 17 Aug. 1585; AGS *Estado* 165/2–3, Philip to Archduke Albert, 14 Sep. 1587 (message for the marquis of Santa Cruz); Oria, 210–14, Philip to the duke of Medina Sidonia, 1 July 1588.
40. BZ 145/76, Mateo Vázquez to Philip and reply, 10 Nov. 1588; KML *MSP: CR* 6/174, Philip to Medina Sidonia, 15 Dec. 1590; IVdeDJ 51/1, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 8 Feb. 1591.
41. Abad, 'Dos inéditos del siglo XVI', 332 (Bartolomé Torres).
42. Márquez Villanueva, 'Giovan Giorgio Trission y el soneto de Hernando de Acuña'.
43. The texts of the Masses by Escobedo and Rogier, and of Infantas's *Quasi stella matutina*, may be found in Sierra, *Música*.
44. Porreño, *Historia*, 346–7, Don John to Margaret, 26 Oct. 1576.

45. *MHSI, LX: Ribadeneira*, II, 492–3, Ruy Gómez to Pedro de Ribadeneira, SJ, 13 Apr. 1559; Fernández Álvarez, *La princesa*, 102–5, based on chap. XVII of Teresa's *Libro de las Fundaciones*.
46. Rodríguez, *Álava*, 97, Álava to Alba, 17 Mar. 1568; AGRB *Audience* 1728/2/77, Alba to Count Bossu, 29 Aug. 1572.
47. BZ 136/19, Pérez to Mateo Vázquez, 13 Nov. 1575 ('Yo me parto hoy . . . a mi romería'); IVdeDJ 60/209–10, Pérez to Philip, 1 Jan. 1576; HSA *Altamira*, 1/II/52 (iv), Barajas to Mateo Vázquez, 15 Dec. 1584; TMLM *Ms* 660, 'Ciertas minutas de principio del año de 1587 sobre cosas de Inglaterra', by Idiáquez.
48. IVdeDJ 51/31 and HSA *Altamira* 1/I/24, Vázquez to Philip, 31 May 1574 and 13 Aug. 1578.
49. IVdeDJ 24/38, Ovando to Philip, 16 Jan. 1574, holograph; *CCG*, X, 331–2, Granvelle to Idiáquez, 21 Aug. 1583.
50. Campanella, *Monarchie d'Espagne* (original Italian version written 1598–1605), 10–13.
51. Clausewitz, *On War*, 119, 139.

Chapter Six: The king at play

1. HSA *Altamira* 5/III/14, Vázquez marginal response, 8 Dec. 1585, to a letter from Juan Fernández de Espinosa.
2. Ruiz, *A king travels*, 7.
3. Firpo, *Relazione*, VIII, 438 and 507 (Soranzo and Cavalli).
4. Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes*, I, 126.
5. *DHME*, V, 58–60, from the 'Diurnal' of Antonio Gracián.
6. AGPM *CR* 2/142v–3, patent for Juan Bautista de Toledo, 12 Aug. 1561 (noting the earlier order of 15 July 1559); Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, II, 170, St Sulpice to Charles IX, 12 June 1564.
7. IVdeDJ 61/386, Philip to Hoyo, with rescript, undated but Apr. 1565.
8. IVdeDJ 61/85–6, Philip to Hoyo, Aug. 1565; AGS *CSR* 247/1 fo. 126, Juan Bautista de Toledo to Hoyo, 13 Aug. 1565, with royal rescript.
9. AGS *CSR* 133/83, Philip to the executors of the emperor's testament, Brussels, 27 July 1559.
10. AGPM *CR* 2/99 and 125v–126, Philip to the General of the Jeronimite Order, 16 Apr. and 20 June 1561; AGS *CSR* 258/265, Jeronimite general to Philip, 1 Jan. 1562 (San Lorenzo de la Victoria became San Lorenzo el Real).
11. *DHME*, I, p. 12 (Villacastín, 'Memorias'); BL *Addl.* 28,350/169, Philip to Hoyo, Sep. 1564.
12. *DHME*, III, prints the 1569 'Cédula por la cual Su Majestad altera algunos capítulos de los de la instrucción de los que tiene dada para la obra del monasterio de Sant Lorenzo' and 'Instrucción para el gobierno y prosecución de la fábrica y obra de Sanct Lorenzo'.
13. *CODOIN*, VII, 163–4, 'Memorias' of San Gerónimo; *DHME*, I, 20; Sigüenza, 452.
14. Wilkinson Zerner, *Juan de Herrera*, 54.
15. AGS *Estado* 153/54 and 77, Antonio Gracián and Dr Velasco to Zayas, both on 9 Aug. 1571.
16. Mulcahy, *Philip II*, 50.
17. [Eliot,] *Ortho-epia Gallica*, 44–5; Howell, *Epistolae*, section III, 115–17, to Sir T. S., undated but 9 Mar. 1623.
18. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 86–91, Villacastín to Lhermite, 4 Mar. 1600, followed by Lhermite's calculations.
19. AGS *CC* 409/26, Fray Hernando de Ciudad Real to Philip, 9 Nov. 1571, with royal apostils.
20. *CODOIN*, VII, 141 (San Gerónimo).
21. Aguiló Alonso, *Orden y decoro*, 123–202; García Tapia, 'El Escorial', 420–1.
22. *CODOIN*, VII, 20, observation by Fray Marcos de Cardona; IVdeDJ 61/1, Philip to Hoyo, undated but probably May 1563; BZ 146/69, Philip to Hoyo, undated but May 1567.
23. AGPM *CR* 2/254, Philip cédula, 8 Nov. 1562; IVdeDJ 61/7, Philip to Hoyo, 26 Dec. 1561.
24. Wilkinson Zerner, 'Construcción de una imagen', 332.
25. IVdeDJ 61/105, Philip to Hoyo, 10 Feb. 1566; *CODOIN*, VII, 157, 'Memorias' of San Gerónimo.
26. IVdeDJ 7/113, Don Luis Osorio to Mateo Vázquez, 13 Dec. 1584, and reply; AGP *CR* 7/66v, order of 19 Mar. 1588.
27. Sigüenza, 102; Lhermite, *Passetemps*, I, 82–3.
28. López Piñero, *Historia de la ciencia*, 91–2, citing Laguna, *Pedacio Dioscorides* (Antwerp, 1555) and Franco, *Libro de enfermedades* (Seville, 1569).
29. Puerto Sarmiento, 'Los "destilatorios" ', 434–6, quoting royal cédulas; Sigüenza, 392.
30. IVdeDJ 61/306, 339 and 360, and BL *Addl.* 28,350/315–26, all undated billetes exchanged between Philip and Hoyo written over the winter of 1562–3.
31. López Piñero, *Historia de la ciencia*, 47–48 (Ondériz), 289–91 (Zúñiga).
32. See chapter 5 on the *Biblia regia*; and Marías Franco, 'Felipe II y los artistas' and Ramirez, *Dios arquitecto*, 215–41 and 249–51 on Philip's sponsorship of *In Ezechielem explanationes*.

33. Royal order printed by van 't Hoff, *Jacob van Deventer*, 36.
34. BNE *Ms.* 5589/64, 'Ynterrogatorio'.
35. Rodríguez, *Álava*, 181, Philip to Don Francés de Álava, 28 May 1567.
36. Herrera, *Institución de la Academia Real Mathemática*, 1, 4 and 19.
37. IVdeDJ, 61/131, Pedro de Hoyo to Philip, and rescript, undated but 1561; Riba, 207, Philip to Vázquez, 21 June 1579.
38. Bouza, *Cartas*, 14 n. 27, prints the *Orden* submitted by Mendoza.
39. Escudero, *Felipe II*, 576, and IVdeDJ 51/172, Philip to Vázquez, 10 Aug. and 21 and 26 May 1578.
40. NA *SP* 94/1/19, Zayas to Antonio de Guaras, 7 Oct. 1577; IVdeDJ 55/IX/155, Philip to Vázquez, 8 Nov. 1586.
41. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 173–8.
42. BL *Addl.* 28, 699/114, Vázquez to Philip, with rescript, 2 May 1577.
43. FCDM *AH* R7–5, Philip to Feria, 18 Feb. 1558; *PEG*, V, 491, Philip to Granvelle and Ruy Gómez, Brussels, 19 Feb. 1559.
44. IVdeDJ 53/5/140 and 53/6/39, Vázquez to Philip, with rescripts, 14 July 1576 and 13 July 1577.
45. *CODOIN*, VII, 385; Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 334–6; Bouza, *Cartas*, 91, Philip to his daughters, 17 Sep. 1582, and note 196.
46. IVdeDJ 51/189, Vázquez to Philip, 20 Apr. 1586, and reply; Bouza, *Cartas*, 181, Philip to Catalina, 10 June 1591.
47. Bouza, *Cartas*, 51, 61 and 113, Philip to his daughters, 10 July and 23 Oct. 1581, and Easter 1584.
48. Riba, 179, Philip to Vázquez, undated but 1578; IVdeDJ 55/XI/121–2 Vázquez to Philip and reply, 27 July 1588.
49. AGS *Estado* 946/141a, Philip to the count of Olivares, ambassador in Rome, 31 Mar. 1585.
50. *DHME*, V, 27; IVdeDJ 55/IX/93, Philip to Vázquez, 8 Dec. 1586; Bouza, *Cartas*, 85, Philip to his daughters, 1583.
51. Bustamante García, 'La arquitectura de Felipe II', 492.
52. Kamen, *Philip*, 55, 90, 222.
53. Smith, *The life*, 19 (funeral oration for Magdalen, Viscountess Montague, née Dacre, by her confessor, to whom she had confided these details). Since Magdalen married in 1556, this incident took place in 1554–5. The 'lewdnes' may have been worse. The Latin original reads "vbi *faciem* suam forte ipsa lauabat": *facies* can mean either 'face' or 'body': Smith, *Vita*, 38–9.
54. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 438–9, Soranzo, Jan. 1565, repeated in William of Orange's *Apology:* Duke, 'William of Orange', 29; Gachard, *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*, II, 177, St Sulpice to Charles IX, 7 Oct. 1564. Ruy Gómez may have been speaking of Isabel Osorio.
55. Belda, 'Carta', 474–5, Zúñiga to Philip, 3 Dec. 1578. Zúñiga, son of Philip's stern governor with the same name, attended the king in the Netherlands and Spain until he went to Rome in 1567.
56. Valente, *Un dramma*, 7–8, Cavaliere Bondi to Cardinal Farnese, 8 Feb. 1586.
57. BL 192.f.17 (i), Lord Burghley's annotated copy of *Relación de la Felicíssima Armada*; Yale University, Beinecke Library, *Osborn Shelves*, fo. 20, [João de Teixiera], 'The Anatomie of Spayne', 65: see *FBD*, 969–70, on the Portuguese original of this translation, written in 1598.

Chapter Seven: Getting a grip, 1558–1561

1. AGS *Estado* 128/378, Philip to Juan Vázquez de Molina, 9 Dec, 1558, holograph postscript; FCDM *AH* R7-19, Philip to Feria, 25 Nov. 1558, holograph; Fernández Álvarez, *Tres embajadores*, 215–19, same to same, 28 Dec. 1558.
2. *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 80–5, Feria to Philip, 21 Nov. 1558 (Feria encoded much of this letter).
3. NA *SP* 70/1, fo. 23, Elizabeth to Cobham, 23 Nov. 1558.
4. FCDM *AH*, R7–19, Philip to Feria, 25 Nov 1558, holograph; *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 83 and 93, Feria to Philip, 21 Nov. and 14 Dec. 1558.
5. Fernández Álvarez, *Tres embajadores*, 215–19, Philip to Feria, 28 Dec. 1558; Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 133/188, Philip to Elizabeth, 27 Dec. 1558, holograph
6. See, for example, NA *SP* 70/2 fo. 49, Philip to Elizabeth, 20 Jan. 1559.
7. *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 111, Feria to Philip, 29 Dec. 1558.
8. González, 'Apuntamientos', 157–9, Philip to Feria, 10 Jan. 1559.
9. FCDM *AH* R7–1 and 21, Philip to Feria, 10 and 28 Jan. 1559, both holograph.
10. *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 133–4, 'Puntos' by Feria for Philip.
11. *Ibid.*, 141, Philip to Feria, 23 Mar. 1559.
12. Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, 101–3, report of a resolution by Philip's council on 26 Oct. 1558 – three weeks before Mary died.
13. *PEG*, V, 585–7, Granvelle to Feria, 3 Apr. 1559.
14. FCDM *AH R*7–23, Philip to Feria, 21 Mar. 1559, holograph.

15. Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado y Felipe II*, I, 85–6, Paul IV to Philip, 6 May 1559.
16. FCDM *AH* R7–22, Philip to Feria, 11 Feb. 1559, holograph; *PEG*, V, 606, Philip to Granvelle, 24 June 1559.
17. BR *Ms* II-2320/124, Granvelle to Juan Vázquez de Molina, 21 July 1559; NA *SP* 70/6/32v–33, Challoner to Elizabeth, 3 Aug. 1559, holograph.
18. AGS *Estado* 137/227, Juana to Philip, 14 July 1559, decoded with the king's holograph comments.
19. AGS *PR* 26/169–70, Philip's Instruction to Ruy Gómez and Dr Velasco and letter to Juana, both 23 July 1559.
20. GRM, I, 444–6, Quijada to Philip, 28 Nov. 1558.
21. *PEG*, V, 628–30, Philip to Granvelle, [29] July 1559.
22. *Ibid.*, 643, Philip to Granvelle, 24 Aug. 1559.
23. *TR*, IV, 318–23, Valdés to Philip, 14 May 1558.
24. *Ibid.*, 434–6, Philip to Valdés and the Suprema, and GRM, I, 302 n. 1, Philip to Juana, both 'del Campo', 6 Sep. 1558.
25. González Novalín, *Inquisidor General*, II, 214–21, Valdés to Paul IV, 9 Sep. 1558, together with the 'Relación'.
26. AGS *PR* 29/33, Testament of Philip, London, 2 July 1557, naming 'la persona que yo oviere proveído por arzobispo de Toledo' to take over 'la administración y gobierno general' of Spain and 'regir y gobernar la persona del dicho príncipe' Don Carlos.
27. *TR*, IV, 589–90, Philip to Juana, undated but Nov. 1558, copy.
28. *Ibid.*, 687–91, Fray Hernando de San Ambrosio to Carranza, Brussels, 5 Apr. 1559; *DH*, V, 183, Philip to Carranza, Brussels, 4 Apr. 1559.
29. *TR*, IV, 680–3, Carranza to Philip, holograph draft, undated (but written shortly before his letter to the king dated 5 Apr. 1559, *ibid.*, 692–4).
30. *Ibid.*, 600–1, Paul IV to Valdés, 7 Jan. 1559; and 763–5, Suprema to Philip, 16 May 1559.
31. *Ibid.*, 831–2, Philip to the Suprema, 26 June 1559.
32. *Ibid.*, 889, Juana to Carranza, 3 Aug. 1559. For the arrest, with its undertones of *Monty Python*'s 'No one expects the Spanish Inquisition', see *DH*, II, 327–32 and *TR*, IV, 196–9.
33. *TR*, IV, 696–7, 'Mandamiento' of Valdés to the university of Alcalá, 11 Apr. 1559.
34. Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, 157, account by Diego de Simancas; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 202.
35. *TR*, IV, 969–72, Pragmática of 22 Nov. 1559.
36. *Ibid.*, 953–4 and 995–6, Feria to Bishop Quadra (his successor as Spanish ambassador in England), Mechelen, 4 Oct. 1559 and 21 Jan. 1560.
37. *DH*, II, 358, Carranza's accusations against Valdés, 4 Sep. 1559.
38. *DH*, V, 336–8, Carranza's response to new charges by Fiscal, 8 Jan. 1563.
39. RAH *Proceso Carranza* 9/1804, fo. 83v, Philip's testimony on 12 Jan. 1560.
40. *DH*, III, 404–5, Philip's testimony, 13 Oct. 1562.
41. Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, II, 44–5, 48 and 80, Philip to Gregory XIII, undated, but spring 1574 (holograph), 21 July 1574, holograph, and 11 June 1576.
42. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 204; *GRM*, II, 465–9, Juana to Charles, 8 Aug. 1558.
43. *GRM*, I, 449–50, Quijada to Felipe, 13 Dec. 1558; AGS *Estado* 128/28, Philip to Quijada, undated minute apparently dictated to, and amended by, Francisco de Eraso. Italics added.
44. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 51–2.
45. Fernández y Fernandez de Retana, *España*, I, 602; Alvar Ezquerra, *Felipe II, la corte y Madrid*, 12, quoting Horozco.
46. *PEG*, V, 673, Philip to Granvelle, 27 Dec. 1559; Alvar Ezquerra, *Felipe II, la corte y Madrid*, 19, royal cédula of 8 May 1561.
47. AGPM *CR* 1/242 and 2/36–38v, royal cédulas of 14 Feb. 1556 and 22 June 1557; and 2/52v–55, Philip to Gaspar de Vega, 15 Feb. 1559; Gérard, *De castillo a palacio*, 12 and 73.
48. *CODOIN*, XCVIII, 53–4, 'Las condiciones con que verná Su Majestad en la tregua', 5 Mar. 1559; *ibid.*, 57–9, Philip to count of Luna, his ambassador at the Imperial court, undated (but Apr. 1559); AGS *Estado* 1210/91, Philip to the governor of Milan, 8 Apr. 1559; and AGS *Estado* 1124/278–302, Instructions of Philip to his ministers in Italy, 15 June 1559.
49. BNE *Ms* 5938/440–441v, 'Divisa' by Gabriel Rincón; Mameranus, *Carmen Gratulatorium*, an item still in the Escorial library.
50. AGS *Estado* 1124/257, Don Bernat de Guimaran to Philip, 21 July 1559.
51. BR *Ms* II–2319/16, Pérez to Granvelle, 6 June 1560.
52. Paris, *Négociations*, 555, Laubespine to Catherine de Medici, 26 Sep. 1560.
53. *CMPG*, II, lxii–xiii, Philip to Margaret of Parma, 15 July 1562.
54. AGRB *Audience* 475/84, Josse de Courtewille, in Madrid, to Viglius, in Brussels, 24 May 1563.
55. BMB *Ms Granvelle* 8/189, Pérez to Granvelle, 19 Feb. 1564.
56. IVdeDJ 61/1, Hoyo to Philip, undated (but probably May 1562).

Chapter Eight: 'I would rather lose a hundred thousand lives if I had them': keeping the faith, 1562–1567

1. *PEG*, V, 674, Philip to Granvelle, 27 Dec. 1559; BR *Ms* II–2249, unfol., Gonzalo Pérez to Granvelle, 19 Nov. 1560; *PEG*, VI, 166, Granvelle to Philip, 12 Sep. 1560.
2. Japikse, *Correspondentie*, I, 143–4, Egmont to Orange, 1 July 1559.
3. Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, I, 44, Philip to Paul IV, Brussels, 24 Apr. 1559, holograph.
4. [Strada], *Supplément*, II, 267–8, Hornes to Eraso, 19 Dec. 1561. AGRB *Audience* 478/3, Philip to Hornes, 9 Feb. 1562, mentioned this letter, which proves that Eraso had shown it to him.
5. AGRB *Audience* 475/84, Josse de Courtewille to Viglius, Madrid, 24 May 1563; BNF *Ms f.f.*, 15,587/3–7, Memorial of Limoges, citing the analysis of François Baudouin, 1563.
6. *CODOIN*, IV, 307, Philip to Margaret, 23 Apr. 1564.
7. AGRB *Audience* 779/30, minutes of the council of State, Brussels, 24 Mar. 1564.
8. *CCG*, I, 27, Secretary Bave to Granvelle, 4 Dec. 1565.
9. AGRB *Audience* 779/120, minutes of council of State, Brussels, 26 Jan. 1565, reporting news from Venice dated 14 Dec. 1565 that included 'nouvelles venues de Constantinople du 3e de decembre passé'.
10. *CMPT*, II, 51–3, Memorial of Egmont to Philip, and AGS *Estado* 527/5, Philip to Pérez, both 24 Mar. 1565.
11. AGS *Estado* 527/5, exchanges between Philip and Pérez, 24–25 Mar. 1565.
12. AGS *Estado* 527/4, 'Instrucción al conde de Egmont', 2 Apr. 1565.
13. *PEG*, IX, 275, Granvelle to Polweiler, 12 June 1565; *GCP*, I, 349, Egmont to Philip, 9 Apr. 1565.
14. *GPGP*, II, 474, and AGS *Estado* 146/147, Pérez to Philip and reply 4 and [10] Apr. 1565.
15. Wauters, *Mémoirs*, 268, account by Hopperus of Egmont's report to the council of State, 5 May 1565.
16. *CMPT*, I, 59, Margaret to Philip, 22 July 1565; *Cahier van der Essen* X/19, Armenteros to Pérez, 10 Oct. 1565.
17. *GPGP*, II, 536, Pérez to Philip, 3 Sep. 1565, with rescript.
18. Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Amor, menosprecio y motines', 218, Guzmán de Silva to Ruy Gómez, 24 Nov. 1565.
19. *CMPT*, II, 258, Margaret to Philip, 19 July 1566.
20. UB Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/2, Alonso de Laloo to count of Hornes, Segovia, 3 Aug. 1566.
21. *CMPT*, II, 269–74, Philip to Margaret, 31 July 1566; AGS *Estado* 531/52–3, 'Registro de la scriptura que Su Magestad otorgó en el Bosque de Segouia a 9 de agosto 1566'; Serrano, I, 316–17, Philip to don Luis de Requesens, his ambassador in Rome, 12 Aug. 1566; *CMPT*, II, 313–15, Philip to Margaret, 9 Aug. 1566.
22. Gilles de Pélichy, 'Contribution', 105–6, Egmont to Philip, 29 Aug. 1566; AGS *Estado* 530, unfol., Margaret to Philip, 27 Aug. 1566 (précis in *GCP*, I, 452–4); and *CMPT*, II, 326–32, same to same, 27 and 29 Aug. 1566.
23. UB Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/4, Alonso de Laloo to count of Hornes, Segovia, 20 and 26 Sep. 1566.
24. IANTT *TSO: CG*, livro 210/14–14v, Pereira to King Sebastian, 23 Sep. 1566; *Cahier van der Essen* XXXIV/18–19, Miguel de Mendivil to Margaret of Parma, 22 Sep. 1566.
25. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 358–63, and Osorio, *Vida y hazañas*, 331–42, describe the crucial debate on 22 Oct. 1566.
26. La Roca, *Resultas*, 85–7.
27. HSA *Ms* B 2010, Alba to 'Vuestra Señoría Ilustrísima' (Espinosa), 'Aranjuez, miércoles a las 8 de la noche' [= 16 Apr. 1567], holograph.
28. All quotations that follow from AA 5/59, Philip to Alba, Madrid, 7 Aug. 1567, holograph original with the passages coded by Philip transcribed *en clair* by Alba's secretary – the only reason we now know the king's plans.
29. Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 81, Alba to the bishop of Orihuela, 18 Sep. 1567, minute; *Epistolario*, I, 694, Alba to Philip, 24 Oct. 1567.
30. *Epistolario*, I, 694, holograph royal apostil on Alba to Philip, 24 Oct. 1567; Serrano, II, 204, Philip to Pius V, 22 Sep. 1567.
31. *ADE*, VII, 235–7, 'Parecer' of Alba, 11 Apr. 1565.
32. AGS *Estado libro* 16/213–16, 'Coniuración del Marqués del Valle'; AGI *Justicia* 997, no. 4, r. 3, investigation of Don Gonzalo de Zúñiga, Madrid, 12 Sep. 1562: AGI *Patronato* 29 r. 13, 'Relación muy verdadera de todo lo sucedido', and r. 18, Juan de Vargas Zapata to Diego de Vargas, Puerto Rico, 1 Aug. 1562; *CODOIN América*, IV, 191–282, 'Relaciones' of the Aguirre rebellion.
33. IANTT *TSO: CG*, livro 210/51v–53, Pereira to King Sebastian, 23 Mar. 1567; Douais, I, 204, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 15 Apr. 1567.
34. AGI *Patronato* 208, r. 4, Philip's Instrucción to his commissioners, copy, May 1567; AGS *Cámara de Castilla, Diversos* 6/50, 'Las personas que están pressos en la cárcel real' (s. f., but 1569); Flint, 'Treason or travesty', 42–4.
35. *CODOIN*, CI, 357–8, Philip to Luis Vanegas de Figueroa, his special envoy to the emperor, 28 Jan. 1568, minute.

Chapter Nine: Family life – and death

1. HHStA *Spanien Hofkorrespondenz*, Karton 1, Mappe 3/161 and 4/27 and 129, and Kamen, *Philip*, 62, Philip to Maximilian, 12 June 1550, 25 Sep. 1551, 24 Apr. and 17 July 1555.
2. *CODOIN*, CIII, 251 and 257, Philip to Luis Vanegas and Baron Chantonnay, 31 July 1569, and to Vanegas, 2 Aug. 1569.
3. *CODOIN*, XXVI, 563–4, Vanegas to Philip, 30 Sep. 1567; *CODOIN*, CX, 78, Philip to Monteagudo, 29 Sep. 1570.
4. Galende Díaz and Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, 246–7 and 263–5, María to Philip, 3 Sep. and 29 Nov. 1573. Maria referred to her brother as 'Your Highness' because the children of Charles V always reserved 'His Majesty' for their father.
5. *CDCV*, IV, 40, Charles to Philip, 30 Apr. 1554.
6. *DH*, III, 407–8, sworn deposition of Juana, 26 Oct. 1562.
7. IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/136–8, Pereira to Sebastian, Juana's son, 19 and 21 Jan. 1568; González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, 412, Juana to Catherine de Medici, 2 May 1569.
8. BL *Addl.* 28,354/542, Philip to Ladrada, 20 Dec. 1572; *CODOIN*, VII, 89, account of Fray Juan de San Jerónimo.
9. González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, I, 229–37 and III, 515–20, describe the queen's various entertainments.
10. Paris, *Négociations*, 807–8, Mme de Vineux to Catherine de Medici, 31 Jan. 1562; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 396, 'Final Relation' of Paolo Tiepolo, 19 Jan. 1563.
11. Rodríguez Salgado, ' "Una perfecta princesa" ', II, 85, quoting Pereira to Sebastian, 21 June and 7 Aug. 1563. Pereira's source was impeccable: his nephew Ruy Gómez.
12. González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, 231–3, St Sulpice to Catherine, Monzón, 25 Nov. 1563.
13. AGS *PR* 30/28, Isabel's holograph testament, dated 27 June 1566.
14. Douais, I, 6, Fourquevaux to Catherine, 3 Nov. 1565; González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, II, 346 n. 31, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 26 Aug. 1566.
15. Douais, I, 51, Fourquevaux to Catherine, 4 Feb. 1566.
16. Cabié, *Ambassade*, 432–3, 'Notes diverses', Sep.–Oct. 1566; Douais, I, 110–12 and 117–18, Fourquevaux to Catherine, 18 and 26 Aug. 1566.
17. González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, 378–90, descriptions of the queen's illness and death.
18. *Ibid.*, II, 533 n., Philip to Catherine, 28 June 1569.
19. Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado y Felipe II*, I, 199–202, Pius V to Philip, 20 Dec. 1568, holograph.
20. AA 7/75, Philip to Alba, 14 Apr. 1569, holograph.
21. Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 99–103, Don Diego de Córdoba to Alba, 1 Feb. 1571; *CODOIN*, XLI, 245, Zayas to Arias Montano, 21 Apr. 1571; BL *Addl.* 28,354/230, 240 and 294, Philip to Ladrada, 10 June, 12 July and 24 Nov. 1571; AA 44/84, Dr Milio to Juan de Albornoz, Madrid, 4 Dec. 1571.
22. AGPM 3/360v–361, royal cédulas dated 12 July 1572.
23. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 721, 'Final Relation' of Alberto Badoero, late 1578.
24. BL *Addl.* 28,354/422, Philip to Ladrada, 10 July 1572. None of these letters has survived: we only know of them through the references in the king's correspondence with Ladrada.
25. BL *Addl.* 28,354/314, 476 and 542, Philip to Ladrada, 17 Dec. 1571, 26 Sep. 1572 and 20 Dec. 1572.
26. BL *Addl.* 28,354/490 and 492, Philip to Ladrada, 2 and 4 Oct. 1572.
27. BL *Addl.* 28,354/25–6, Espinosa to Ladrada, 11 Apr. 1570; and 394–5, Philip to Ladrada, 17 May 1572; BL *Addl.* 28,342/322, Philip to Fray Buenaventura de Santíbañez, chaplain of the infantas, 27 May 1581.
28. IVdeDJ 51/170 and 21/576, Mateo Vázquez to Philip and rescript, 20 and 21 July 1575.
29. *El oro y la plata*, 663, Philip to Francisco de Garnica, undated but 1575.
30. IVdeDJ 22D No.30, Don Pedro Niño to Mateo Vázquez, 11 Oct. 1577.
31. Bouza, *Cartas*, 88, Philip to the Infantas, 30 July 1582. By contrast, after Catalina's departure in 1585 the king preserved all her holograph letters to him: they are today in BL *Addl.* 28,419.
32. Bouza, *Cartas*, 77 and 85, Philip to the Infantas, 19 Mar. and 4 June 1582.
33. *Ibid.*, 116–17, Philip to Catalina, 18 June 1585. Cock, *Relación del viaje*, 145, notes that Catalina had cried her eyes out as she said farewell to her father a few days earlier.
34. Bouza, *Cartas*, 120–1 and 157, Philip to Catalina, 17 July 1585 and 14 June 1588.
35. *Ibid.*, 99 and 109, Philip to the Infantas, 25 Oct. 1582 and 26 Oct. 1583.
36. *Ibid.*, 75 and 40–1, Philip to the Infantas, 5 Mar. 1582 and 1 May 1581.
37. *Ibid.*, 64 and 94, Philip to the Infantas, 20 Nov. and 25 Dec. 1581 and 1 Oct. 1582.
38. Grierson, *King of two worlds*, 166, Philip to Granvelle.
39. Khevenhüller, *Diario*, 286; *CODOIN*, VII, 364, 367 and 370; Sigüenza, 100–1.
40. Bouza, *Cartas*, 68, 71 and 81–2, letter to the Infantas, 29 Jan., 19 Feb. and 7 May 1582. Philip certainly had an excellent memory for dates: he said farewell to his sister in 1548, when he left Spain, and saw her again briefly only in 1551 in Zaragoza and in 1556 in Brussels.

41. Khevenhüller, *Diario*, 286–7.
42. Tormo y Monzó, *En las Descalzas Reales*, 186–7, Margarita to Philip, undated.
43. Khevenhüller, *Diario*, 287; Tormo y Monzó, *En las Descalzas Reales*, I, 187–90.
44. Khevenhüller, *Diario*, 287–8. Charles V had also feared that marrying a teenage bride might kill Philip: chapter 1.
45. Khevenhüller, *Diario*, 271.
46. Tellechea Idígoras, 'La mesa' (2002), 186–7 and 201–2, 'Serva Tadea' to Philip, Rome, 8 Dec. 1560.
47. *BMO*, II, 378, Philip to Parma, 19 Oct. 1586.
48. MacKay, *The baker*, 154, Ana de Austria to Philip, Nov. 1594.
49. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 192–3, Granvelle to Margaret of Parma, 13 Oct. 1579.
50. AGS *CSR* 133/108 (total debts), 129 (cédula of July 1559) and 113, 'consulta de descargos' and rescript, 11 Feb. 1579.
51. AGS *DGT Inv.* 24 903 No. 1, Inventory of the goods of Don Carlos, 9 Feb. 1568, audited on 6 Sep. 1586; *CODOIN*, XXVIII, 567–9, cédula to Diego de Olarte, 2 Apr. 1577.

Chapter Ten: The enigma of Don Carlos

1. NA *SP* 70/101/10, Dr Man to William Cecil, San Sebastián, 6 Aug. 1568, italics added.
2. Duke, 'William of Orange', 28; Anon., *Diogenes*, first published at Liège. Lieder, *The Don Carlos theme*, lists the different accounts of the prince's fate down to 1930. Schiller's *Don Karlos* may even have inspired the 'plot' of George Lucas's 1977 film *Star Wars*: see High, *Who is this Schiller now?*, 13–14.
3. IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/136–7, Pereira to Sebastian, 19 Jan. 1568 ('ffoy ouvir missa a capella, e o principe con ele').
4. My account of the arrest draws on four sources, the first two related to Ruy Gómez: IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/136–7, Pereira to Sebastian, 19 Jan. 1568; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 689–90, 'Avviso d'un Italiano plático y familiar de Ruy Gómez'; *ibid.*, 674–8, Nobili to Duke Cosimo, 25 Jan. 1568, and *ibid.*, 684–7, 'Relación histórica' by a gentleman of the prince's household.
5. IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/136–7 and 148v–150, Pereira to Sebastian, 19 Jan. 1568 and 11 Feb. 1568; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 395, Charles de Tisnacq to Viglius, 31 Jan. 1568; Douais, I, 314, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 22 Jan. 1568.
6. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 677, Nobili to Duke Cosimo de Medici, 25 Jan. 1568; IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/137–8, Pereira to Sebastian, 21 Jan. 1568.
7. ASMa *AG* 583/164, Philip to duke of Mantua, 22 Jan. 1568; Douais, I, 318, Fourquevaux to Catherine de Medici, 22 Jan. 1568.
8. AGS *Estado libro* 16/191, Philip to Queen Catherine, 20 Jan. 1568, copy by Juan de Verzosa (slightly different copy in IANTT *Miscelaneas Manuscritas*, 964/187–8). Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 409–10, printed the letter but asserted incorrectly that it was addressed to María and Maximilian and dated 21 Jan. 1568.
9. Koch, *Quellen*, Dietrichstein to Maximilian, 7 Feb. 1568; ASF *MP* 4898/226v–228, Nobili to Duke Cosimo, 13 Apr. 1568.
10. IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/146–50, Pereira to Catherine, 7 Feb. 1568 and to Sebastian, 16 Feb. 1568.
11. AGS *Estado* 150/11–12, Philip to María, heavily corrected minute and fair copy, [19] May 1568.
12. Rodríguez Ramos, 'Los comienzos', and personal comunications from Dr Rodríguez Ramos.
13. AGS *PR* 29/35, Codicil signed by Philip, Ghent, 5 Aug. 1559.
14. *CODOIN*, XXVII, 207–10, Felipe to the corregidor of Gibraltar, 13 Sep. 1561, and reply.
15. BAV *VL* 7,008/351 'Proceso de la beatificación y canonización de San Diego de Alcalá', testimony of Dr Diego López. I thank Andrew Villalon for this reference and for the translation.
16. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 110, Paolo Tiepolo to Doge of Venice, Madrid, 20 June 1562; *CODOIN*, XVIII, 557.
17. HSA *Altamira* 13/I/10, Philip to Don García de Toledo, undated but summer 1563.
18. Strohmayer, *Korrespondenz*, I, 203 and 231, Dietrichstein to Maximilian, 22 Apr. and 29 June 1564.
19. Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología de Felipe II*, 106, quoting Philip to Alba, undated; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 229 n. 1, Philip to Chantonnay, his ambassador in Vienna, 12 Sep. 1564.
20. Douais, I, 321, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, Madrid, 5 Feb. 1568, reporting a conversation with Ruy Gómez on 27 Jan.
21. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 443–5; Álvarez de Toledo, *Alonso Pérez*, II, 279, Prior Don Antonio to Don García de Toledo, 'early 1566'; Douais, I, 200, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, Madrid, 15 Apr. 1567.
22. Douais, I, 220, Mémoire dated 30 June 1567; AGS *Estado* 657/39–40, 51 and 64, Chantonnay to Philip, 17 Apr. 67 (received in Madrid 16 May); 9 July 1567 (endorsed by the king on 4 Aug.); and 30 Aug. 1567 (received 10 Nov. and endorsed by Pérez 'to be seen while His Highness is present') – the latest example I have found.

23. BL *Addl.* 28,262/329, Pérez to Philip, undated, but spring 1567; *Cahier van der Essen* XXVI, fos. 20–21, Margaret of Parma to Don Carlos, 20 Apr. and 6 July 1567; AGS *CC* 387/2, Josse de Courtewille to Don Carlos, 16 June 1567.
24. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 672–3, Cavalli to the Doge of Venice, 11 Feb. 1568.
25. Douais, I, 165–6, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 4 Jan. 1567.
26. AGS *DGT Inv 24*, leg. 903 No. 1, Inventory of 9 Feb. 1568; Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, 'Lectura y bibliofilia' (Morisot), and a personal communication dated 26 Mar. 2009 on *Theuerdank*. On the artefacts, see Cervera Vera, 'Juan de Herrera'.
27. *CODOIN*, XXVII, 138, testimony of Juan de Espinosa, who 'was present and saw this happen', as part of an audit of Lobón's accounts in 1583.
28. Douais, I, 257, Fourquevaux to Catherine de Medici, 24 Aug. 1567; van der Hammen, *Don Juan*, fos. 39–40, writing in 1627 (partly published in Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 321–2 and 335–6).
29. *CODOIN*, XXVII, 82, 'Cuentas fenescidas'; AGS *DGT Inv.* 24, leg 903 No. 1, 'Cuentas con Antonio Fúcar'.
30. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 676–7, Nobili to Duke Cosimo, 25 Jan. 1568; ASMa *AG* 594, unfol., Roberti to duke of Mantua, 13 Apr. 1568.
31. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 684–6, 'Relación histórica'; van der Hammen, *Don Juan*, 40; ASMa *AG* 594, unfol., Roberti to duke of Mantua, 3 Mar. 1568, decoded folio.
32. Douais, I, 322, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 5 Feb. 1568; IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/137–8, Pereira to Sebastian, 21 Jan. 1568.
33. All the letters in AGS *CC* 387 were written in 1567 except for one from Miguel López de Legazpi, which began 'I left New Spain at the end of the year 1564'. The presence of the same unctuous phrases in this letter, written from Cebu in the Philippines, proves that they were already in vogue before he left.
34. In a brilliant piece of historical detection, Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 75–99, reconstructs the membership, interests and influence of the 'Academy'.
35. Serrano, II, 299, Castagna to Alejandrino, 4 Feb. 1568, cyphered; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 366, quoting a letter from Fourquevaux dated 8 Feb. 1568.
36. Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia general*, 681 (book I, xv. 2).
37. Gachard, *Don Carlos*, 387, Philip to Alba, 6 Apr. 1568, holograph.
38. IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/155v–156v, Pereira to Catherine, 25 Feb. 1568.
39. *MHSI Borgia*, IV, 649, Lerma to Francisco de Borja, 1 Oct. 1568.
40. Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, 423, Philip to the university of Salamanca, 27 July 1568.
41. Douais, I, 371, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 26 July 1568; *MHSI Borgia*, IV, 649, Lerma to Borja, 1 Oct. 1568; Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, 412, Dr Milio to Alba, 16 Aug. 1568; *CODOIN*, XCVII, 460, Zúñiga to Don Rodrigo Manuel, 28 Apr. 1568. The last three letters were all private, written to confidants, which makes them more reliable.
42. González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, 54, Isabel to Fourquevaux, [19] Jan 1568; Douais, I, 319, Fourquevaux to Catherine de Medici, 22 Jan. 1568.

Chapter Eleven: Years of crusade, 1568–1572

1. IVdeDJ 38/70, Espinosa to Philip, with rescript, undated but Nov. 1569.
2. BL *Addl.* 28,704/270v, Espinosa to Alba, 4 Dec. 1571, register copy; AA 44/84, Dr Milio to Juan de Albornoz, Alba's secretary, Madrid, 4 Dec. 1571.
3. *CODOIN*, XXXVII, 84, and *CODOIN*, IV, 497–506, Alba to Philip, 6 Jan. and 9 June 1568. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations in the next two paragraphs come from the second document.
4. *CODOIN*, IV, 506–13, Alba to Felipe, 23 Nov. 1568.
5. AA 6/75, Philip to Alba, 14 Apr. 1569.
6. *CODOIN*, IV, 521–5, Philip to Alba, Córdoba, 4 Apr. 1570, minute, corrected by the king.
7. *Ibid.*, 533–8, Alba to Philip, Brussels, 18 Mar. 1570, with death sentence dated 4 Apr.
8. Gachard, *Etudes*, 85.
9. *CODOIN*, IV, 560–6 and 539–40, Philip to Alba, 3 Nov. 1570, and to Peralta, 17 Aug. 1570.
10. The account in this and the following paragraph rests upon *CODOIN*, IV, 542–9, Instruction of Dr Velasco to Alcalde Arellano, 1 Oct. 1570; *idem*, 550–1 and 559–60, Peralta to Philip, Simancas, 10 and 17 Aug. 1570; *idem*, 554–9, Fray Hernando del Castillo to Dr Velasco, 16 Oct. 1570; and *idem*, 560–6, 'Relación de la muerte de Montigni' drawn up by Philip for Alba 2 Nov. 1570 and his covering letter dated 3 Nov.
11. AGS *Estado* 542/88, holograph memorial written by Montigny, Simancas, 15 Oct. 1570; Gachard, 'Floris de Montmorency', 61–2; *CODOIN*, IV, 565–6, Philip to Alba, 3 Nov. 1570.
12. Ramos, 'La crisis indiana', 11, quoting Dr Francisco Hernández de Liébana.
13. *Ibid.*, 8–9, opinion of Fresneda, and 25, Toledo's summary of the junta's discussions, Nov. 1568.

14. *Ibid.*, 52–3, quoting Toledo; AGNM *CRD* 1bis/20, registered the fifty or so royal cédulas issued between 30 Nov. 1568 and 11 Sep. 1569. Abril Castelló and Abril Stoffels, *Francisco de la Cruz*, II, 130–94, print the full text of the recommendations sent by the Junta Magna to Philip. See also Brendecke, *Imperium*, chap. 7 on the Junta's goals and achievements.
15. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 119, quoting the royal cédula of 18 Nov. 1566. Fuchs, *Exotic nation*, 23, lists the prohibited practices.
16. IVdeDJ 38/70, Espinosa to Philip and rescript, undated but Apr. 1569.
17. BL *Addl.* 28,354/45–6, Martín de Gaztelu to marquis of Ladrasada, Córdoba, 26 May 1570. Édouard, *L'empire imaginaire*, 140, describes the royal entry into Córdoba on 22 Feb. 1570.
18. Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *Historia*, 51, Instruction to Alonso de Carvajal, commissioner of Baza; Alcalá-Zamora, 'El problema', 342.
19. Adams 'The genetic legacy', 732.
20. Serrano, III, 251, Don Juan de Zúñiga to Philip, 7 Mar. 1570.
21. IVdeDJ 21/43, Espinosa to Philip, with rescript, undated but Jan. 1571.
22. Serrano, IV, 445, Philip to Don Juan de Zúñiga, his ambassador in Rome, 28 Sep. 1571, minute; Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, 767, Don John to Ruy Gómez, 16 Sep. 1571, holograph.
23. Cervantes, *Novelas Exemplares*, prologue; García Hernán and García Hernán, *Lepanto*, 44, Doria on 9 Oct. 1571; BL *Addl.* 28,704/270v, Espinosa to Alba, 4 Dec. 1571, register copy; Lesure, *Lépante*, 151–2, orders from the Council of Ten to Admiral Venier, Venice, 22 Oct. 1571.
24. Serrano, II, 360, Philip to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 8 Mar. 1568.
25. Serrano, IV, 382, Castagna to Rusticucci, 9 July 1571.
26. AA 7/58, Philip to Alba, 14 July 1571, cyphered with decrypt; BL *Addl.* 28,336/76, Dr Velasco to Espinosa, 9 Aug. 1571. See similar incredulous statements from other ministers at this time in chapter 5.
27. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, II, 602; IVdeDJ 67/1, Don Luis de Requesens to Andrés Ponce de León, a prominent minister in Madrid, Jan 1574, copy, relating Alba's 'exit interview'.
28. Galende Díaz and Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, 238–41, María to Philip, two letters dated 13 Feb. 1572.
29. Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 1st series III, 362, Orange to Count John of Nassau, 20 Feb. 1570.
30. *CCG*, IV, 594–5 and AGS *Estado* 553/4–2, Philip to Alba, Feb. and 16 Mar. 1572, minutes.
31. *CCG*, IV, 146–52, Morillon to Granvelle, 24 Mar. 1572.
32. AGS *Estado* 553/94 and 99, Philip to Alba, 20 Apr. and 17 May 1572, minutes corrected by king.
33. *CCG*, IV, 428, Morillon to Granvelle, 16 Sep. 1572; Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 1st series III, 505, and IV, cii, Orange to John of Nassau, 21 Sep. 1572.
34. *Epistolario*, III, 251 and 261, Alba to Philip, 28 Nov. and 19 Dec. 1572.

Chapter Twelve: Years of adversity, 1573–1576

1. BPU *Ms. Favre* 30/30, Philip to Requesens, 30 Jan. 1573, copy of the holograph original.
2. AA 8/45, Philip to Alba, 8 July 1573, received 19 Aug.
3. AGS *Estado* 8340/242, Alba to Don John of Austria, 18 Sep. 1573.
4. BPU *Ms. Favre* 30/71–4, Philip to Requesens, 20 Oct. 1573, copy of the holograph original.
5. *CODOIN*, CII, 277–306, Philip's Instructions for Requesens, undated but 21 Oct. 1573.
6. AGS *Estado* 554/146, Requesens to Philip, 30 Dec. 1573.
7. AGS *Estado* 561/25, 'Consulta de negocios de Flandes' by Gabriel de Zayas, 24 Feb. 1574.
8. AGS *Estado* 561/77, Philip to Requesens, 12 May 1574, minute; BRB *Réserve précieuse/Kostbare werken, Hs.* 1678A, General Pardon, signed 8 Mar. and promulgated 6 June 1574, original.
9. HSA *Altamira* 3/II/12 Granvelle to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 6 Dec. 1573, copy; AGS *Estado* 561/25, vote of the count of Chinchón; *CODOIN*, LXXV, 236–40, Alba to Zayas, 8 July 1573.
10. AGS *Estado* 554/89, Philip to Alba, 18 Mar. 1573.
11. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 126–8, Don John to Margaret of Parma, Genoa, 4 May 1574.
12. AA 33/156, Hernando Delgadillo to Juan de Albornoz, 9 July 1574; AGS *Estado* 559/104, Requesens to Philip, 12 Dec. 1574; HSA *Altamira* 3/V/15, Granvelle to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 23 Sep. 1574.
13. AA 28/3, Alonso de Laloo to Juan de Albornoz, 9 Oct. 1574.
14. AGS *Estado* 560/74 and 91, Requesens to Philip, 16 Sep. 1574, and Francisco de Valdés to Requesens, 18 Sep. 1574.
15. AGS *Estado* 561/122, Philip to Requesens, 22 Oct. 1574, minute, with holograph corrections by Philip, based on the translation in Waxman, 'Strategic Terror', 344–7.
16. AGS *Estado* 560/8, Requesens to Philip, 6 Nov. 1574; Pi Corrales, *España*, 89, 103 and 181–4, and 191–6.
17. IVdeDJ 53/3/64, Philip to Vázquez, 17 May 1574 (on Menéndez's pessimism); Pi Corrales, *España*, 214–17, Menéndez to Pedro Menéndez Márquez, 8 Sep. 1574.

18. AA 131/167, Philip to Covarrubias, holograph, undated, but apparently written just before IVdeDJ 21/233, 'Para las juntas de los presidentes', 19 June 1573, Vázquez draft of Philip's charge to the junta; IVdeDJ 76/530, and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 131, Minutes of the Junta of Presidents, 24 June 1573.
19. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 168–9, Philip to Covarrubias, 4 and 23 Jan. 1574.
20. IVdeDJ 76/491–503 and 507–9, Ovando's 'Relación' to Philip, 11 Apr. 1574, Easter Day. Drelichman and Voth, *Lending*, 110–11 and elsewhere, argue that the king's outstanding debts to his bankers in 1575 were less than 15 million ducats, a figure calculated only from the debts included in the great rescheduling operation known as the *Medio General* (chapter 13), excluding all other loans. They dismiss the higher estimates of Philip's debts made by his own treasury officials as 'a gross exaggeration' (*ibid.*, 14). Álvarez-Nogal and Chamley, 'Debt policy', 195, argue that even the rescheduled debt totals 'given by Drelichman and Voth are overstated', arguing instead that the total capital of loans outstanding in 1575 was 10.4 million ducats. I believe Philips' officials.
21. BL *Eg.* 1506/18–19, Quiroga to Philip and rescript, 16 Mar. 1574.
22. IVdeDJ 53/3/56, 51/30, 53/3/43, and 51/31, Philip to Vázquez, 13, 15, 24 and 31 May 1574. See chapter 5 for yet more complaints to the same minister during these desperate weeks.
23. IVdeDJ 51/33, 53/3/87, and 53/3/77, Philip to Vázquez, 20 June, 4 and 18 July 1574.
24. Pizarro Llorente, *Un gran patrón*, 352–4, citing consultas of the council of State and of the Suprema in Nov. 1575; BL *Eg.* 1506/54, Quiroga to Philip, 6 May 1577, with rescript.
25. BZ 144/34, Vázquez to Philip and rescript, 10 Dec. 1574.
26. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 128–30, Don John to Margaret of Parma, Trapani, 3 Oct. 1574.
27. IVdeDJ 38/69, Philip to Vázquez, 19 Jan. 1575.
28. IVdeDJ 24/103, Ovando to Philip, 25 Mar. 1575.
29. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 131, Don John to Margaret of Parma, 19 June 1575; IVdeDJ, 44/119, Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, 10 May 1575.
30. IVdeDJ 67/271 and 106, Requesens to the count of Monteagudo, Spanish ambassador at the Imperial Court, 6 Mar. 1575, and to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 9 July 1575.
31. BZ 144/61, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 31 May 1575.
32. Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 154–5, Philip to Don Juan de Idiáquez, 8 Sep. 1575; and 191, Philip to all corregidors and judges of Castile.
33. *Ibid.*, 193, Martín de Gaztelu to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 9 Nov. 1575; HSA *Altamira* 7/III/29 Domingo de Zavala to Philip, Madrid, 17 Nov. 1575, copy; IVdeDJ, 37/72, Requesens to Zúñiga, 12 Nov. 1575.
34. IVdeDJ 60/138–43, Pérez to Philip and rescript, 23 Mar. 1576.
35. Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 264, Juan Fernández de Espinosa to Philip, 1577; IVdeDJ, 53/5/35, Philip to Vázquez, 22 Feb. 1576.

Chapter Thirteen: The crisis of the reign, 1576–1577

1. AGS *Estado* 489, unfol., 'Lo que se platicó y paresçió en consejo destado a ix de mayo 1578' with royal apostils; *GCP*, IV, 426–7, Philip's notes for his final interview with Don John of Austria, Oct. 1576; AGS *Estado* 556/5, Alba to Philip, 8 Jan. 1573.
2. Riba, 25–26, Vázquez to Philip, 21 Mar. 1576.
3. Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, 6; González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, 7.
4. BL *Addl.* 28,262/568–70, Pérez to Philip, and rescript, undated but July 1573.
5. Marañón, *Los Procesos*, 56, testimony of Jerónimo Díaz, 11 Aug. 1585; AGS *Estado* 1134/123, Don John to Pérez, Messina, 11 Nov. 1571; TMLM, *Ms.* 129960, Pérez to Philip, 30 Nov. 1574.
6. IVdeDJ 38/62–75 (unfoliated carpeta), Vázquez to Philip and rescript, 25 June 1575; Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, 1002–3, Philip to Juan Andrea Doria, 29 July 1575.
7. AGS *Estado* 570/133, Philip to Don John, 8 Apr. 1576, minute; *idem*, fos 140 and 150, Pérez to Escobedo, 8 Apr, 1576, minutes heavily corrected by the king.
8. AGS *Estado* 570/149, Pérez to Escobedo, 8 Apr. 1576, minute, and fo. 133, Philip to Don John, 8 Apr. 1576.
9. IVdeDJ 60/225–6 Pérez to Philip, undated but May or June 1576; and 36/38, same to same, 16 June 1576, with rescripts.
10. BL *Addl.* 28,262/207, Antonio Pérez to Philip with rescript, 1 July 1576.
11. ASF *MP* 2860/115–16 and 297–316, 'Avisos' from Genoa, 10 and 15 June 1576, and from Milan, 12–29 July 1576.
12. *CODOIN*, XV, 547–53, Pérez to Escobedo, 16 Apr. 1576.
13. AGRB *Gachard* 666/187, Don John to duke of Urbino, Milan, 8 Aug. 1576, copy.
14. Belda, 'Carta', 475, Zúñiga to Philip, 3 Dec. 1578.
15. *GCP*, IV, 346–7, patent for Don John and letters for Netherlands ministers, and NA *SP* 70/139 fo. 123, Philip to Queen Elizabeth, all signed by Philip on 26 Aug. even though dated 1 Sep. 1576 (see FBD, 1263, n 43).

16. *GCP*, IV, 321–2, Don John to Philip, Barcelona Roads, 22 Aug. 1576, and the king's reply, undated but 29 Aug.
17. BL *Eg.* 1506/38–42 and 44–5, Quiroga to Philip, 24 Aug. (with rescript dated 29th) and 31 Aug. 1576 (with a rescript on the following day).
18. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 92, Margaret to Don John, 22 Aug. 1576.
19. BL *Addl.* 28,263/62–3 and 53, Philip to Vázquez, 27 Oct. 1576, and 19 Sep. 1576.
20. BL *Eg.* 1506/42 and 46–47v, Quiroga to Philip, 29 and 30 Sep. 1576, with rescripts.
21. *GCP*, IV, 426–7, copies of two sets of notes in the king's hand, undated but Oct. 1576.
22. Porreño, *Historia*, 427–8, Don John to Philip, Irún, 24 Oct. 1576, holograph.
23. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, IX, 15–21, and *GCP*, V, 27–8, Instructions of Philip to Don John, 11 Nov. 1576, drafts.
24. *CODOIN*, L, 298–9 and 303–4, Escobedo to Philip, St Dié in Lorrraine, 28 Nov. 1576, and Luxemburg, 8 Dec. 1576.
25. AGRB *Gachard* 666/297, Don John to the duke of Savoy, Bastogne, 19 Dec. 1576, copy.
26. BL *Eg.* 1506/42 and 50, Quiroga to Philip, 29 Sep. and 3 Oct. 1576, with rescripts.
27. Luna, *Comentarios*, 35 ('el oficio de espía doble').
28. AHN *Inq. libro* 284/94 (new foliation 103), Quiroga to Philip, and rescript, 18 Mar. 1578; AGS *Estado* 569/150bis, Don John to Philip, 21 Nov. 1576, with apostils presumably written at least two weeks later. Ungerer, 'La defensa', 133, notes that Pérez and Los Vélez both studied at Alcalá in 1558–9.
29. AGS *Estado* 569/133–4, Don John to Philip, 6 Dec. 76, 'visto por los dos'; ASF *MP* 4910/178, Luigi Dovara to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, 25 Feb. 1579.
30. BL *Addl.* 28,262/599–601, Pérez to Philip, with rescript (undated, but probably Apr. 1577); Morel-Fatio, *L'Espagne*, 111, Don John of Austria to Don Rodrigo de Mendoza, 9 Dec. 1576.
31. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 74, Don John to Margaret of Parma, 8 Nov. 1573; Fórmica, *Doña María*, 19, Octavio Gonzaga to Pérez, 20 Oct. 1578.
32. BL *Addl.* 28,262/219–21 and 225–6, Pérez to Philip, 1 Jan. and 8 Feb. 1577.
33. Porreño, *Historia*, 454, Don John to Philip, 22 Dec. 1576; *CODOIN*, L, 300–1, Escobedo to Philip, 10 Jan. 1577.
34. AGS *Estado* 2843/3, Philip to Don John, 31 Jan. 1577.
35. BL *Addl.* 28,262/236–237v, Pérez to Philip, with rescript, 12 Feb. 1577.
36. BL *Addl.* 28,262/236–237v, *ut supra*.
37. AGS *Estado* 570/65, Philip to Don John, 12 Feb. 1577.
38. Gachard, *Don Juan*, 140–2, Don John to Margaret of Parma, Marche, 17 Feb. 1577.
39. Voci, 'L'impresa', 381, cardinal of Como to Don John, 2 Apr. 1577; and 423, same to Ormanetto, 12 Apr. 1577.
40. *Ibid*., 424–5, Ormanetto to Como, 26 Apr. 1577.
41. BL *Addl.* 28,262/256–7, Philip to Pérez, 4 Apr. 1577; Voci, 'L'impresa', 424–5, Ormanetto to Como, 26 Apr. 1577.
42. BL *Addl.* 28,262/243–4 and 250–3, Pérez to Philip and rescript, 28 and 29 Mar. 1577; *GCP*, V, 282–8, Philip to Don John, 6 Apr. 1577.
43. Griffiths, *Representative government*, 460, 'Vraye narration des propos . . . à Gheertrudenberghe', an Orangist account of the conference held 13–23 May 1577.
44. Porreño, *Historia*, 477–80, Don John to Philip, 26 May 1577. ARA *Staten Generaal* 11,915 contains numerous transcripts of intercepted and decoded letters from Escobedo and Don John from 1577 about England. See also BL *Cott*. Cal. C. V/97v–98, Escobedo to Philip, 9 Apr. 1577, coded original with decrypt and English translation.
45. BPU *Ms. Favre* 28/185–7, Philip to Sessa, 28 Aug. 1577 (two letters, both originals); AGS *Estado* 1247/133, Philip to marquis of Ayamonte, 28 Aug. 1577, minute; AGS *Estado* 571/56, Philip to Don John, minute apparently drafted by Zayas on 27 Aug. and corrected by the king the following day (fo. 53), and sent 1 Sep. 1577.
46. BL *Eg.* 1506/207–9, Quiroga to Philip, 'Thursday' [= 12 Sep. 1577], describing the council meeting of the day before, and AGS *Estado* 2843/1, 'Parecer de los V del Consejo de Estado', 11 Sep. 1577, both with rescripts.
47. BPU *Ms. Favre* 28/195–6, Philip to Sessa; AGS *Estado* 571/88, Philip to Don John; and HSA *Altamira* 1/I/46), Diego de Covarrubias to Philip, with rescript, all dated 11 Sep. 1577.
48. IVdeDJ 36/21, Don John to Zúñiga, 30 Sep. 1577.
49. González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, 77–9, Pérez to Doña Juana Coello, 23 Feb. 1590. Mignet, *Antonio Pérez*, 280–5, explicitly denied that in 1577 Don John made contact with Guise; but AGRB *Audience* 1685/3, 1686/1 and 1779/2 all contain an extensive correspondence between the two men about supplying food and troops at this time.
50. AGS *Estado* 572/142, Don John to Philip, 20 Nov. 1577; AHN *Inq. libro* 284/83 (new foliation 87), Quiroga to Philip, with rescript, 1 Oct. 1577.
51. BNF *Ms. Esp*. 132/11, Philip to Juan de Vargas Mexía, 24 Jan. 1578.

Chapter Fourteen: Murder most foul?

1. Marañón, *Los Procesos*, 186, testimony of Don Pedro de Mendoza, 25 Sep. 1589; ASVe *SDS* 11/65, Badoer to the Doge and Senate of Venice, 3 Apr. 1578; Valente, *Un dramma*, 55, Juan de Samaniego to the prince of Parma, 4 Apr. 1578; ASMo *CD Ambasciatori Spagna* 11, 1578, No. IX, Orazio Maleguzzi to the duke of Ferrara, 4 Apr. 1578. In their dispatches, all the Italian ambassadors used 'Italian time', in which the circadian cycle began half an hour after sunset; so when they stated that the murder of Escobedo occurred 'a un' hora di notte', they meant ninety minutes after sunset – which in March, in Madrid, meant around 9 p.m.
2. IVdeDJ 51/161, Philip to Vázquez, the Escorial, 1 Apr. 1578 (also in Muro, *Vida*, appendix 12); ASF *MP* 4910/57, Baccio Orlandini to Grand Duke of Tuscany, 2 Apr. 1578.
3. ASMo *CD Ambasciatori Spagna* 11, 1578, No. X, Maleguzzi to duke of Ferrara, 12 Apr. 1578, minute.
4. Marañón, *Los Procesos*, 23 and 201–2, Auto by Antonio Márquez, secretary of the tribunal, 29 Dec. 1589; and 207, 'Traslado del papel de Su Magestad que está escrito de su real mano', 4 Jan. 1590.
5. *Ibid.*, 217–18, 'Diligençia en el tormento con el secretario Antonio Pérez', 23 Feb. 1590; KB *Hs.* 128.b.3/12v–16, Escobedo to Pérez, 7 Feb. 1577, copy presented by Pérez to the Justicia of Aragon.
6. Marañón, *Los Procesos*, 217–18, 'Diligençia en el tormento con el secretario Antonio Pérez', 23 Feb. 1590. A few hours later, Pérez sent his wife an almost identical account of what he had confessed after torture: González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, 77–9, Pérez to Doña Juana Coello, 23 Feb. 1590.
7. HSA *Ms* B 1252/4, Alba billete, almost certainly addressed to Zayas, undated but probably 11 or 12 Sep. 1577.
8. For the order to bring Orange 'dead or alive', see chapter 15; for Pérez, see chapter 18. For examples of other extrajudicial executions, see chapter 16.
9. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 220, 'Declaración de Diego Martínez', 24 Feb. 1590.
10. *Ibid.*, 220, 'Declaración de Diego Martínez'; 116–21, 'Declaración de Antonio Enríquez', 30 June 1585; and 97, supplementary question to Enríquez on 1 Feb. 1590.
11. *Ibid.*, 121–2 (Enríquez), 221 (Martínez) and 65, 'Declaración de Martín Gutiérrez', 20 Dec. 85.
12. Pérez, *Relaciones y cartas*, I, 272–3, 'Memorial que Antonio Pérez presentó'.
13. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 161–8, Pérez to Philip, 3, 16, 23 Feb. and 17 and 26 Mar. 1589.
14. *Ibid.*, 46, testimonio of Castro, Lisbon, 5 June 1582.
15. ASF *MP* 4910/177–8, Dovara to Grand Duke, 25 Feb. 1579.
16. AGS *Estado* 574/66 and 79, Don John to Philip, 17 Feb. 1577, two holograph letters; BL *Addl.* 28,262/263–4, 266–9 and 546, Pérez to Philip, 5 and 6 Apr. 1577, and undated (but July 1577); AHN *Inq. libro* 284/83 (new foliation 87), Quiroga to Philip, with rescript, 1 Oct. 1577.
17. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 227, 'Declaración del Licenciado Bartolomé de la Hera', 2 Mar. 1590; and 172, 'Declaración de Doña Beatriz de Frías', 18 Sep. 1589 ('era un suçio'). Dadson and Reed, *Epistolario*, 77–84, 161, 210–11, 217–18, 233–4, 234–9 (the princess's longest surviving letter), 241–2, 269–70, 271–3 and 278–9 print all of Ana's known letters and commissions to Escobedo, starting in 1558.
18. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 251–2, 'Declaración' of Favara, 22 Oct. 1590.
19. *Ibid.*, 215 and 217, 'Diligençia en el tormento con el secretario Antonio Pérez', 23 Feb. 1590.
20. AGS *Estado* 570/139, Pérez to Escobedo, Apr. 1576, minute. The same happened the following month when Philip extensively revised letters to Escobedo purportedly written by Pérez: chapter 13.
21. BNF *Ms. Esp.* 132/ 179–80 and 66, Pérez to Vargas Mexía, 26 Jan. 1579 and 15 June 1578.
22. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Felipe II*, III, 1392, quoting a comment made by Quiroga in 1590.
23. Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología*, 37–8, Pérez to Andrés de Prada, 15 Oct. 1578.
24. Dadson and Reed, *Epistolario*, 403–4, Ana's warrant appointing Antonio Enríquez 'mi criado' as her 'contador', 20 Mar. 1581, backdated to 4 June 1580 'because that is when he began to serve me', and 530–1, salary increase from 1 Jan. 1583; BZ 142/7 bis, Vázquez to Philip II and rescript, 28 July 1578 (printed with some alternative readings in Muro, *Vida*, appendix 165).
25. Riba, 177–8, Vázquez to Philip, 24 May 1578.
26. Muro, *Vida*, appendix 14, Pedro Núñez to Vázquez, 26 Dec. 1578, and appendix 17, Dr Milio to Vázquez, 6 Jan. 1579, both referring to the anger of the princess.
27. BZ 144/224, Philip to Vázquez, 15 Nov. 1578.
28. IVdeDJ 51/181, Vázquez to Philip, the Escorial, 28 Dec. 1578.
29. IVdeDJ 44/57–8, Vázquez to Philip and rescripts, 11 and 15 Apr. 1574.
30. Martínez Hernández, 'El desafío', published these love letters, undated but from 1566, for the first time.
31. *CODOIN*, VIII, 487–8, Alba cédula to Don Fadrique, Madrid, 2 Oct. 1578.
32. Riba, 192–3, Vázquez to Philip, 30 Nov. 1578.
33. HSA *Altamira* 1/I/101, Pérez to Philip with rescript, 2 Jan. 1579.
34. *CODOIN*, VIII, 509–11, Pazos to Philip with rescript, 6 July 1579; Martínez Hernández, 'El desafío', and *idem*, *El marqués de Velada*, 163–78.

35. Valente, *Un dramma*, 53, Bologna to Cardinal Farnese, 4 Aug. 1579; Muro, *Vida*, appendix 18, Vázquez to Dr Milio, Jan. 1579 (Milio acted as an intermediary between the secretaries).
36. Muro, *Vida*, appendix 30, Pazos to Philip, with rescript, 7 Mar. 1579. This appears to be the first time Philip referred to the Pérez affair as something that affected his conscience.
37. *Ibid*., appendix 31, Vázquez to Philip, with rescript, 16 Mar. 1579; ASF *MP* 4910/216, Dovara to the Grand Duke, 25 Mar. 1579; AST *LM*, 2, unfol., Carlo Pallavicini to the duke of Savoy, 29 Mar. 1579.
38. *CCG*, VII, 352–3, and Mignet, *Antonio Pérez*, 104, Philip to Granvelle, 30 Mar. 1579; ASG *AS* 2416, unfol., Passano to Doge of Genoa, 6 June 1579.
39. Sigüenza, 92–3.
40. ASV *NS* 22/170, Sega to the papal secretary of state, 11 May 1579, reporting on his audience; BL *Addl.* 28,263/225–6, Vázquez to Philip with rescript, 21 June 1579.
41. BZ 143/207–8, Vázquez to Philip, the Escorial, 24 June 1579; Muro, *Vida*, appendix 47, Instructions of Vázquez to the count of Barajas, 9 July 1579.
42. The only known text of the princess's note appeared in Pérez, *Relaciones*, I, 113–15, a tainted source; but since many ambassadors summarized it in similar terms – see, for example: Valente, *Un dramma*, 53, Samaniego to Parma, 1 Aug. 1579; ASMo, *CD AS* 11, 1579, No. XXIII, Malaguzzi to Ferrara, 4 Aug. 1579 – I accept it as genuine. So do Dadson and Reed, *Epistolario*, 381–3.
43. BZ 162/6 bis, Philip to duke of Infantado, 29 July 1579; *CCG* VII, 443, Granvelle to Margaret of Parma, 12 Sep. 1579.
44. BZ 143/212, Vázquez to Philip, 26 July 1579.
45. BZ 143/212, rescript of Philip to Vázquez, 26 July 1579; Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, 445, citing Jerónimo Zurita; BZ 143/211, Vázquez to Philip with rescript, 26–27 July 1579.
46. *CODOIN*, LVI, 212–14, Philip to Pazos, undated but 28 July 1579, holograph, and Pazos's petulant reply the following day: 'This morning at seven o'clock one of my servants brought me Your Majesty's note . . .'
47. Muro, *Vida*, appendix 53, Pedro Núñez to Vázquez, 1 Aug. 1579; Valente, *Un dramma*, 53, Bologna to Cardinal Farnese, 4 Aug. 1579
48. ASMo *CD AS* 11, 1579 No. XXII, Maleguzzi to duke of Ferrara, 29 Aug. 1579, minute.

Chapter Fifteen: Years of triumph, 1578–1585

1. BL *Addl.* 28,262/ 632–5v, Pérez to Philip, and rescript, 13 Aug.1578; Sigüenza, 86; *CODOIN*, VII, 229.
2. AGS *Estado* 489, unfol., 'Lo que se platicó y paresçió en consejo destado a ix de mayo 1578'.
3. ASVe *SDS* 11/51, Alberto Badoer to Doge, 6 Jan. 1578, quoting a letter 'di pugno di Sua Maiestà'; AGS *Estado* 395/197, Philip to Silva, 31 May 1578, copy; *CODOIN*, XL, 87–8, Silva to Philip, 4 Oct. 1578.
4. HSA *Altamira* 1/I/24, Vázquez to Philip and reply; AGS *GA* 88/244, Philip to Delgado; and BL *Addl.* 28,262/285–6, Philip to Pérez, and rescript, all dated 13 Aug. 1578.
5. BL *Addl.* 28,262/632-5v, Pérez to Philip, and rescript, undated [= 13 Aug. 1578].
6. BL *Addl.* 28,262/632–5v, *ut supra*.
7. *CODOIN*, XL, 137–8, 160 and 169–70, Moura to Philip, Lisbon, 26 Aug., 25 Sep. and 23 Oct. 1578.
8. Fernández Conti, 'La Junta Militar', 292 n. 24, rescript of Philip on a consulta from Delgado, 26 Oct. 1578, enclosing plans from Alba and Santa Cruz; AGS *GA* 88/317, 362 and 353, Delgado to Philip, 30 Oct. and 1 and 13 Dec. 1578, each with a long royal rescript.
9. *CODOIN*, XL, 143 and 196, Moura to Philip, 26 Aug. and 25 Nov. 1578; Fernández Collado, *Gregorio XIII*, 53–4, quoting Nuncio Sega's account of Philip's denial at an audience early in 1579.
10. AGS *GA* 89/196, Delgado to Philip, undated but July–August 1579, with a long royal rescript; ASF *Urbino* I/185/19, Bernardo Maschi to duke of Urbino, 10 Jan. 1580.
11. BSLE *Ms* &III.12, San Pedro, *Diálogo llamado Philippino*, fo. 5v (expertly discussed by Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 75–83); *CODOIN*, XL, 198, Moura to Philip, Lisbon, 25 Nov. 1578.
12. *CODOIN*, VI, 30–2, 78 and 350, Moura to Philip, 29 Nov. 1578, and Philip to Moura, 26 Jan. and 14 Apr. 1579.
13. *CODOIN*, VI., 661, Philip to the duke of Osuna, his special envoy to King Henry, 24 Aug. 1579.
14. AGS *GA* 94/26 and 28, Philip to Delgado, 30 Jan. 1580.
15. Suárez Inclán, *Guerra*, 222, Moura to Philip, 4 June 1580; ASVe *SDS* 12/74, Morosini to Doge, 8 Feb. 1580; Kamen, *Philip*, 173, Philip to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 13 Feb. 1580; *CODOIN*, VIII, 516–19, Pazos to Philip, 15 Feb. 1580.
16. Suárez Inclán, *Guerra*, 96–7 and notes, Philip to Moura, 16 Feb. 1580, with a copy of Delgado's billete.
17. Porreño, *Dichos y hechos*, 29.
18. *CODOIN*, XXXV, 61–2, Philip to Alba, Badajoz, 5 Aug. 1580, holograph.

19. *CODOIN*, XXXII, 482 and 489, Alba to Philip, 28 and 30 Aug. 1580.
20. *CODOIN*, XXXIII, 234, Philip apostil on a letter from Arceo to Zayas, Lisbon, 4 Nov. 1580.
21. Velázquez, *La entrada*, fo. 69; IVdeDJ 56 carpeta 21, unfol., Vázquez to [Hernando de Vega], 17 Apr. 1581.
22. Bouza, *Cartas*, 35, Philip to his daughters, 3 Apr. 1581; BL *Addl.* 28,357/498, cédula of Aug. 1581; Bouza, *Cartas*, 89 n. 192, letter of Gaspar de los Arcos, Tomar, 20 Mar. 1581.
23. Rodríguez Salgado, *Felipe II*, 171, Don Juan de Zúñiga to Philip, 19 July 1581; AGS *Estado* 939/128 and 143, Philip to Zúñiga, Lisbon, 8 and 23 Oct. 1581.
24. *CODOIN*, XXXII, 480–3 and 507–10, Alba to Philip, 28 Aug. 1580, with apostil, and Philip to Alba, 31 Aug. 1580.
25. Freitas de Meneses, *Os Açores*, I, 82–4, and II, 66, Figueroa to Philip, 3 Aug. 1582.
26. Muro, *Vida*, appendices 66 and 73, Hernando de Vega to Vázquez, 25 Aug. and 17 Sep. 1579; *ibid*., appendix 64, Pedro Núñez to Vázquez, 25 Aug 1579; Pérez, *Relaciones y Cartas*, I, 122.
27. Muro, *Vida*, appendices 104 and 116, Pazos to Philip, 19 Dec. 1580 and 17 Apr. 1581, with rescripts.
28. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 46–51, testimony of Don Rodrigo de Castro and Don Fernando de Solís, 5 and 9 June 1582; *CODOIN*, LVI, 397–406, Pazos to Philip, 4 and 18 Nov. 1581, with rescripts; HSA *Altamira* 1/I/6, Mateo Vázquez to Philip, with rescript, 7 Sep. 1581.
29. Riba, 217, Philip to Sancho Bustos de Villegas, 12 Feb. 1580, holograph; Bratli, *Philippe II*, 235, Philip to Salazar, 8 June 1581, also holograph.
30. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 35–7, testimony of 'Luis de Overa' [= Luigi Dovara], Lisbon, 30 May 1582; Muro, *Vida*, 196–8, Philip to Rodrigo Vázquez, 27 Aug. 1582, minute (which explains why it survives, despite the royal injunction to burn the original).
31. *CODOIN*, LVI, 419–20, Pazos to Philip, 8 Sep. 1582, with rescript; Muro, *Vida*, 196–200, Philip to the princess of Éboli, 8 Nov. 1582
32. HSA *Altamira* 1/I/6, fos. 189 and 191, Mateo Vázquez to Philip and rescript, 7 Sep. 1582; Fernández Duro, *Conquista de los Azores*, 396–9, Instruction for Santa Cruz, the Escorial, 6 June 1583.
33. IVdeDJ 51/105, Mateo Vázquez to Philip and reply, 22 Aug. 1583.
34. ASMa *AG* 598, unfol., Lepido Agnello to duke of Mantua, Madrid, 6 June 1579; Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 85–6.
35. Keeler, *Sir Francis Drake's West Indian Voyage*, 245–6 and 315, 'A summarie and true discourse of Sir Francis Drake's West Indian Voyage' (1589).
36. ASC 48/3, Santa Cruz to Philip, Angra, 9 Aug. 1583, draft, and Philip to Santa Cruz, 23 Sep. 1583 (partially printed in *BMO*, I, 406).
37. NMM *Ms PH* 1B/435, Olivares to Don Juan de Zúñiga, 24 Sep. 1583, deciphered with royal holograph apostil.
38. Benítez Sánchez-Blanco, 'De moriscos, papeles y archivos', 116–17, account by Don Juan de Idiáquez of the deliberations of a committee on the 'Morisco problem' in 1581–3.
39. Massarella, *Japanese travellers*, 250.
40. IVdeDJ 76/161–2, Vega to Philip and reply, 24 Mar. 1582, copy.
41. IVdeDJ 68/306 and 286, Vega to Philip and rescripts, 8 June and 22 Aug. 1583.
42. *CCG*, XI, 58–9 and 64, Granvelle to Philip, 3 Aug. 1584, and to Idiáquez, 4 Aug. 1584 (Anjou was also duke of Alençon); and HSA *Altamira* 5/V/3, Vázquez to Philip, with reply, 3 Aug. 1584.
43. NA *SP*12/179/36–8, Examination of Pedro de Villareal, 13 June 1585 OS; and NA *SP* 12/180/59A, captured letter from Juan del Hoyo, merchant, 5 July 1585 NS.

Chapter Sixteen: 'The most potent monarch in Christendom'

1. Salazar, *Política española*, 24; González Dávila, *Teatro*, 1; Feltham, *A brief character*, 84–5; Camden, *Historie*, book IV, 131.
2. Bratli, *Philippe II*, 222, Relation of Philippe de Caverel, Lisbon, 1582; Longlée, 48, to Henry III, 20 June 1584; *CCG*, X, 126, Granvelle to Bellefontaine, Madrid, 3 Apr. 1583.
3. Sánchez Cantón, *Inventarios reales*, II, 41, 77, 115–21, 145 and so on; Bouza, *Cartas*, 57 and 88–9, Philip to his daughters, 2 Oct. 1581 and 30 July 1582.
4. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 116; AGPM 237, *Inventarios reales*, 3/278r–279v, 'Las dibersas pieças de plata para servicio de la barbería'.
5. Bouza, *Cartas*, 53–4 and 103, Philip to his daughters, 21 Aug. 1581 and 14 Feb. 1583; BZ 143/46 and 50, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 16 and 20 Mar. 1588.
6. IVdeDJ 53/5/35, HSA *Altamira* 1/I/19, HSA *Ms* B 228, and BL *Addl.* 28,700/151 and 155, Vázquez to Philip, and replies, 22 Feb. 1576, 17 Dec. 1584, 13 Jan. and 7 and 9 Feb. 1587.
7. BL *Addl.* 28,357/13, Philip to Alba, 28 July 1573; IVdeDJ, 55/IX/ 217, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 17 Oct. 1588.
8. *DHME*, V, 111; AHN *Inq. Libro* 100/551, Juan Ruiz de Velasco to Mateo Vázquez, 23 Aug. 1588.

9. BL *Addl.* 28,354/490, marquis of Ladrada to Philip, and rescript, 2 Oct. 1572 ('Terrible gente son los físicos').
10. BL *Addl.* 28,354/479–80 and 506, Ladrada to Philip, and rescripts, 27 Sep. and 16 Oct. 1572; IVdeDJ 7/95, Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, 24 Sep. 1590.
11. Bratli, *Philippe II*, 222, 'Relation' by Philippe de Caverel; BZ 142/67, Philip to Vázquez, 3 Feb. 1584.
12. HSA *Altamira* 1/II/52 (i) and 53, Vázquez to Philip, with replies, both dated 4 July 1584.
13. BL *Addl.* 28,362/1, count of Barajas to Vázquez, 1 Jan. 1584.
14. BAV *UL* 1115/108–9, 'Aviso' from Madrid, 10 Jan. 1587; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, 1172; Martínez Millán and Fernández Conti, *La Monarquía*, 318, quoting contemporary accounts.
15. BL *Addl.* 28,361/110, corrected draft of the *Pragmática*, 11 Sep. 1586, returned to Mateo Vázquez who (sarcastically?) endorsed the file 'Coronets and courtesies'. Numerous drafts of the *Pragmática*, each one festooned with royal apostils, fill fos 31–145 of the same volume, even though (in retrospect) 'no importa nada'.
16. IVdeDJ 55/XI/153, Vázquez to Philip and reply, 10 Aug. 1588; AHN *Inq. Libro* 100/551, Juan Ruiz de Velasco to Vázquez, 23 Aug. 1588.
17. IVdeDJ 21/740 and 374, notes by Philip and Mateo Vázquez on a letter from the general of the Jeronimite Order, 12 Sep. 1589, and Jerónimo Gassol to Philip, and reply, 8 July 1591.
18. IVdeDJ 51/175, and BZ 142/6, Vázquez to Philip, 29 Dec. 1577 and 4 Nov. 1580 (concerning Don Antonio de Padilla).
19. Escudero, *Felipe II*, 536, Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, undated but 1577; BZ 80/540, Memorial from Francisco de Mendoza to Philip with rescript, Naples, 22 Dec. 1588; González Dávila, *Teatro,* 369–70, Dr Hernández de Liévana to Philip, autumn 1572.
20. IVdeDJ 62/853, Philip to Vázquez, 23 Mar. 1575; BL *Addl.* 28,263/213–14, Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, 20 Feb. 1579.
21. *CODOIN*, LVI, 293–4, Pazos to Philip, with rescript, 29 Feb. 1580.
22. Morel-Fatio, 'La Vie', VII, 235 and 251.
23. HSA *Altamira*, 1/I/44, Medina Sidonia to Vázquez, 29 Feb. 1588, and *idem*, 1/I/46, Vázquez to Philip, 8 Mar. 1588, with rescript.
24. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 227, Chaves to Mateo Vázquez, Mar. 1586.
25. Hernando Sánchez, 'Estar en nuestro lugar', 286 n. 230, Philip to viceroy of Naples, 4 Oct. 1579; Encinas, II, 311–15 (an order reissued five times during the reign).
26. Schäfer, *El consejo real,* I, 149–50, consulta of the council of the Indies, with rescript, 7 July 1583, concerning licenciado Salcedo.
27. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia,* III, 1397.
28. BL *Eg.* 1506/92–3 and 94, Quiroga to Philip and rescript, 15 and 19 Nov. 1578
29. BL *Eg.* 1506/20, Quiroga to Philip and rescript, 17 Mar. 1574; AHN *Inq. libro* 101/226 and 208, consultas of the Suprema, 23 and 24 Nov. 1592, with rescripts.
30. AGPM CR 3/164v–166 and 274, cédulas of 22 Dec. 1569 and 18 Oct. 1571; AGS *CSR* 275/2 fos 60, 74 and 87–8 (cédulas from 1569 about disciplining the Pardo poachers).
31. Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia general*, II, 46–7; Las Heras, 'Indultos', 129–30; Velázquez, *La entrada*, fos 79–81.
32. BZ 142/201, Vázquez to Philip, 22 Jan. 1587; Arrieta Alberdi, 'Gobernar rescribiendo', 93, consulta of the council of Aragon, and rescript, 16 July 1588; IVdeDJ 21/586, Philip to Don Diego de Covarrubias, 14 Dec. 1575.
33. AGS *PR* 29/35 codicil signed by Philip, Ghent, 5 Aug. 1559.
34. AGS *PR* 26/143, Instruction to Ruy Gómez and the duke of Alburquerque, London, 13 Apr. 1557; Muro, *Vida*, 198–200, Philip to the princess of Éboli, 8 Nov. 1582.
35. AHN *Inq. libro* 249/550v–551, royal cédula to Joan Sánchez, 30 May 1589, register copy. This volume contains hundreds of similar cédulas.
36. ASMa *AG* 598 unfol., Lepido Agnello to duke of Mantua, 8 June 1580; IVdeDJ 21/148–57, correspondence of Vázquez with Philip, Jan.–Mar. 1583; *CSPV*, VIII, 174, Gradenigo and Lippomano to Doge and Senate, 25 June 1586. *FBD*, 790–2, lists the known attempts to assassinate the king.
37. Sigüenza, 76; Muro, *Vida*, appendix 12, Esteban de Ibarra to Mateo Vázquez, undated but Apr. 1578.
38. Iñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales,* sermon of Dr Aguilar de Terrones, fo. 7.
39. Porreño, *Dichos y hechos*, 74; Jorzick, *Herrschaftssymbolik*, 47–8, Philip to the viceroy of Peru, 1573, and 62 n. 39, memorial to Philip, 2 Nov. 1593.
40. NA *SP* 70/6 fo. 15, Challoner to Elizabeth, Ghent, 3 Aug. 1559, draft; *DHME*, IV, 4 (Sepúlveda, 'Historia'); Cock, *Relación*, 47, 52.
41. Santullano, *Obras completas de Teresa de Jesús*, 1394, Teresa to Doña Inés Nieto [1576–7]; Donà, 75–8, letter to the Doge of Venice, 1 Oct. 1570; Iñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales,* sermon by Dr Terrones, fo. 12.

42. AHN *Inq. libro* 100/242, 243, and 294, Philip to Quiroga, 26 July, 16 Feb. and Oct. 1576, all holograph; AHN *Inq. Libro* 101/325, consulta of the Suprema and rescript, 11 Jan. 1592; *ibid*., fo. 695, Philip rescript to Licenciado Arenillas, 4 Dec. 1594.
43. Donà, 340, letter to Venice, 1 Aug. 1571
44. UB Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/3, Alonso de Laloo to the count of Hornes, 31 Aug. 1566; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 670, Final Relation of Donà, Jan. 1574.
45. BL *Addl.* 28,264/26–7, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert, 9 Aug. 1557, holograph postscript; *CODOIN*, XCVIII, 483, Philip to the count of Luna, 8 Aug. 1563; AGS *Estado K* 1448/197, Philip to Don Bernardino de Mendoza, 28 July 1588.
46. *CODOIN*, XXXV, 61, Philip to Alba, 2 Aug. 1580, holograph postscript; AGS *CJH* 324/27, 'Gastos Secretos' of Don Bernardino de Mendoza while ambassador in England, payment in Aug. 1578.
47. AMAE (M) *AEESS* 11/28, Philip to the duke of Sessa, 5 Feb. 1592.
48. Ugolini, 'Le comunicazioni postali', 321.
49. Douais, II, 127–8 and 142, Fourquevaux to Charles IX and report attached, 31 Oct. 1569.
50. Woltjer, *Friesland*, 3, count of Aremberg to Margaret of Parma, 15 Sep. 1566.
51. AGS *Estado K* 1490/50, Philip to Emmanuel Philibert, 26 July 1557, holograph; AA 5/69, Philip to Alba, 7 Aug. 1567, holograph; AGS, *Estado* 561/122, Philip to Requesens, 22 Oct. 1574, minute.
52. HSA Altamira 5/III/14, Vázquez to Juan Fernández, 8 Dec. 1585; *BMO*, III, 1274 and 1225, Philip to Santa Cruz, 21 and 10 Oct. 1587.
53. Watts, 'Friction in future war', 91; and Jablonsky, *The owl of Minerva,* 33–6.

Chapter Seventeen: The 'Enterprise of England', 1585–1588

1. *BMO*, I, 478, royal apostil on a letter from the count of Olivares to Philip, 4 June 1585, with rescript.
2. *BMO*, I, 496 and AGS *Estado* 946/229, Philip to Olivares, 2 and 22 Aug. 1585.
3. OÖLA *KB* 4/137, Khevenhüller to Rudolf II, 13 Oct. 1585; BR *Ms* II–1670/180, Philip to Licenciado Antolinez, 31 Oct. 1585.
4. Villari and Parker, *La política de Felipe II,* 110–15, Zúñiga to Philip, undated but late 1585.
5. *CCG*, XII, 133–5, Granvelle to Charles de Mansfelt, 29 Nov. 1585.
6. IVdeDJ 23/385, Castro to Hernando de Vega, president of the council of the Indies, Seville, 15 Nov. 1585, together with the council's consulta to Philip dated 30 Nov. 1585, with royal rescript.
7. *BMO*, I, 536–7, 'Lo que se responde a Su Santidad', undated but 24 Oct. 1585.
8. *BMO*, 564–7, Santa Cruz to Philip, 13 Feb. 1586, and Philip and Idiáquez to Santa Cruz, 26 Feb. 1586 (February is the correct month, not 'January' as the volume states).
9. *BMO*, II, 108–11, Parma to Philip, 20 Apr. 1586, and 195–6, 'Lo que dixo Juan Bautista Piata'.
10. HSA *Altamira* 7/II/24 'Memoria de algunas de las cosas que se han avisado passan estos días en Madrid', Mateo Vázquez, at the Escorial, to the count of Barajas, in Madrid [18 July 1586].
11. *BMO*, II, 212, 'Parecer' of Don Juan de Zúñiga (June/July 1586). After the death of his father in Sep. 1586, Alexander Farnese, formerly prince of Parma, became duke of Parma.
12. Heredia Herrera, *Catálogo*, I, 597, consulta of the council of the Indies, and rescript, 3 Sep. 1586.
13. *BMO*, II, 305–7, Don Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip, 13 Aug. 1586 (with copious royal apostils) and 338–9, Philip's reply, 5 Sep. 1586.
14. BL *Addl.* 28,376/336, Andrés de Prada to Don Juan de Idiáquez, 17 May 1587; BL *Addl*. 28,363/116, Juan Ruiz de Velasco to Mateo Vázquez, 20 June 1587.
15. *BMO*, III, 1967–8, Philip to Santa Cruz, 14 Sep. 1587.
16. *BMO*, III, 1006–7, Philip to Parma, 4 Sep. 1587.
17. *BMO*, III, 1069–70, Philip to Parma, 14 Sep. 1587.
18. *BMO*, III, 1225 and 1274, Philip to Santa Cruz, 10 and 21 Nov. 1587.
19. ASVe *SDS* 20, unfol., Lippomano to Venice, 14 Sep. 1587, enclosing a copy of Santa Cruz's letter of the 4th.
20. BZ 143/87, memorandum by Philip, 7 June 1588; BZ 141/160, Philip to the count of Barajas, 18 June 1588, copy.
21. OÖLA *KB* 4/311–12, Khevenhüller to Rudolf II, 13 July 1588.
22. *CSPV*, VIII, 273, Lippomano to doge and Senate, 9 May 1587; BL *Addl*. 28,363/50, Zayas to Vázquez, 10 May 1587.
23 . Maura, 258–61, Medina Sidonia to Philip, 24 June 1588, repeating what he had written in February (in a letter not yet found).
24. Oria, 152, Idiáquez and Moura to Medina Sidonia, 22 Feb. 1588.
25. KML *MSP: CR* 5/82, Philip to Medina Sidonia, 11 Mar. 1588. See p. 289 above on the duke's attempt to secure favours from the king through blackmail.
26. *BMO*, III, 1964, Bertendona to Philip, 15 Feb. 1588.
27. BZ 142/171[a], Philip's address to the Cortes, Jan. 1588, holograph; Oria, 152, Idiáquez and Moura to Medina Sidonia, 22 Feb. 1588.

28. Fernández Duro, II, 9–10, Philip's Instruction to Medina Sidonia, 1 Apr 1588, minute.
29. Maura, 258–61, Medina Sidonia to Philip, 21 and 24 June 1588.
30. BZ 143/97 and 111, Philip to Vázquez, 18 and 28 June 1588.
31. Oria, 210–14, Philip to Medina Sidonia, 1 July 1588.
32. AGS *Estado* 455/320–1, Medina Sidonia to Parma, 10 June 1588, copy sent to Philip (with his comments).
33. Canestrini and Desjardins, *Négociations,* IV, 737, Filippo Cavriana to the Tuscan government, Paris, 22 Nov. 1587; Laughton, *State Papers,* I, 358–62, Hawkins to Walsingham, 10 Aug. 1588 NS; AGS *Estado* 595/32, Idiáquez to Philip and reply, Aug. 1588.
34. Van Meteren, *Historie*, book 15.
35. Parker, 'Anatomy of defeat', 321, Don Alonso de Leyva to Juan Martínez de Recalde, 12 Aug. 1588. Magellan's fleet had taken three years to circumnavigate the globe, and few survivors saw Spain again in 1522.
36. AGS *Estado* 2219/84 and 87, Philip to Parma and Medina Sidonia, 31 Aug. 1588; *idem*, fos 85–6 'Apuntamiento en materia de armada que Su Magestad mandó hazer para que se considere y resuelva entre el duque de Parma, su sobrino, y el duque de Medina Sidonia'; and *idem*, fo. 91, notes by Idiáquez dated 15 Sep. 1588.
37. IVdeDJ 51/190, Vázquez to Philip, 4 Sep. 1588, enclosing a note from Pedro Nuñez written the previous day.
38. Parker, 'Anatomy of defeat', 319, royal apostil on a note from Martín de Idiáquez, Oct. 1588; BZ 145/76, Mateo Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, 10 Nov. 1588.
39. ASV *NS* 34/415–18 and 583–5, Novara to Montalto, 6 July and 8 Nov. 1588.
40. *DHME*, IV, 59, 'Historia'; Sigüenza, 120.

Chapter Eighteen: Philip at bay, 1589–1592

1. *MHSI, LX: Ribadeneira*, II, 105–11, Ribadeneira to Don Juan de Idiáquez, undated but autumn 1588.
2. Ungerer, 'La defensa', published an annotated edition of the charges presented to Pérez in Madrid on 12 June 1584, and of his responses signed six days later. Quotations from pp. 100–4 and 148–9.
3. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 57–9, Enríquez to Philip, Lérida, 16 Aug. 1584.
4. AGS *CJH* 248/21/2, petition of Pérez to Philip, 25 Aug. 1587, with cédula of 8 Dec. 1584 on dorse.
5. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 116–26, declaration of Enríquez, Monzón, 30 June 1585; AHPM *tomo* 1104/1364–1414, 'escriptura' dated 20 May 1588 concerning the auction in 1585.
6. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 185, testimony of the count of Barajas, president of the council of Castile, 21 Sep. 1589.
7. AGS *CJH* 248/21/2, petition of Pérez to Philip, 25 Aug. 1587; Marañón, *Los procesos*, 148–51, suit by Pedro de Escobedo against Pérez and Martínez for murder, presented to them 2 Sep. 1587.
8. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 32–4, commission to Rodrigo Vázquez, undated but Aug. 1588.
9. *Ibid.*, 195–8, Chaves to Pérez, the Escorial, 5 and 18 Sep. 1589, notarized copies; González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, 71, 'Escrituras de concierto entre Antonio Pérez y Pedro [de] Escobedo', 29 Sep. 1589. On the role and probable motives of Chaves, see Martínez Peñas, *El confesor*, 327–41.
10. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 199–200, Philip's order to Rodrigo Vázquez to get this information from Antonio Pérez, and Vázquez's order to the guards, and Interrogation of Pérez, all 21 Dec. 1589.
11. *Ibid.*, 258–9, Auto by Pérez's judges, 14 May 1590.
12. *CODOIN*, LVI, 454 and 466, part of the notarized account of the princess's confinement.
13. Marañón, *Los procesos*, 197–8, Chaves to Pérez, 18 Sep. 1589, notarized copy.
14. Pizarro Llorente, *Un gran patrón*, 362.
15. AGS *Estado* 2851, unfol., 'Lo que se platicó en el Consejo de Estado a 12 de noviembre 1588', and consulta of 26 Nov. 1588 with Philip's holograph response; *ACC*, X, 233–43, Actas of 22, 23 and 30 Aug. 1588.
16. *ACC*, X, 348–9, Acta of 7 Dec. 1588.
17. *ACC*, X, 397–8 and 422–3, Acta of 8 Feb. 1589.
18. BZ 143/203, Vázquez's proposal to the Junta de Cortes, 23 June 1589; Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana, *Bertendona Papers*, no. 21, Philip to Bertendona, 23 June 1589.
19. AGS *Estado* 2219/197, Philip to Parma, 7 Sep. 1589.
20. IVdeDJ 51/1, Vázquez to Philip, and rescript, 8 Feb. 1591.
21. Bouza, 'Corte y protesta', 21–2, Proclamation of 29 Jan. 1591; and 30–1, quoting the confession of Juan de Soria.
22. Luna, *Comentarios*, 29–30, prints the manifesto.
23. Ruiz, *A king travels*, 156.
24. *CODOIN*, XV, 464–5, 'Declaración de Diego de Bustamente', Jan. 1591. KB *Hs* 128.c.3 appears to be one of these thirty copies – perhaps the only one to survive.

25. BL *Eg.* 1508/215–18, 'Relación de las causas y procesos de las personas que fueron condenadas', evidence against Tomás de Rueda and Nicolás Blanco, burned for their role in the riots of 24 May 1591.
26. *CODOIN*, XII, 269, Fray Agustín Labata to Fray Andrés de Sanmillán, 20 July 1591; *CODOIN*, XV, 499, count of Morata to count of Chinchón, Zaragoza, 21 Aug. 1591.
27. Luna, *Comentarios*, 178, Gandía to Idiáquez, undated but summer 1591; Lovett, 'Philip II, Antonio Pérez', 141, Junta Grande on 25 July 1591; AHN *Inq. libro* 101/226 and 208, consultas of the Suprema, 23 and 24 Nov. 1592, with royal rescripts dated 7 Dec.
28. Lovett, 'Philip II, Antonio Pérez', 152, Junta Grande on 31 July 1591, and rescript; BL *Eg.* 1508/215–18, 'Relación de las causas y procesos de las personas que fueron condenadas en auto público de fee', evidence against Andrés de Naya, burned at the stake for his role in the riots of 24 Sep. 1591.
29. Pidal, *Historia*, II, 201, Philip to the 'universidades' of Aragon, 15 Oct. 1591, and 233, to the deputies of the kingdom, 2 Nov. 1591.
30. AHN *Inq. libro* 101/339 and 324–5, consultas of 2, 9 and 11 Jan. 1592, with royal rescripts.
31. ACP *Bobadilla* B–7a, Bobadilla to Chinchón 1 Mar. 1592, with reply on the 10th.
32. Gracia Rivas, *La 'invasión'*, 157–8 and 165, Bobadilla to Philip and Chinchón, both 18 Mar. 1592.
33. ACP *Bobadilla* B–7a, Bobadilla to Chinchón, 9 May 1592.
34. AHN *Inq. libro* 101/283 and 264, consulta of the Junta of Aragon, 18 June and 9 Aug. 1592, with royal rescripts; BL *Eg.* 1506/180 and 186, Suprema to Philip, with rescripts, 31 Oct. and 7 Nov. 1592.
35. Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, 666–70, narrates the arrest, imprisonment and death of Villahermosa and the count of Aranda; quotations from the count of Luna's *Comentarios*, and Céspedes y Meneses, *Historia apologética*.
36. AHN *Inq. libro* 101/233, consulta of the Suprema, 7 Nov. 1592, and royal rescript.
37. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, I, 200–1.
38. AHN *Inq. libro* 101/226 and 208, consultas of the Suprema, 23 and 24 Nov. 1592, with royal rescripts dated 7 Dec.
39. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 206–8 ('183 leagues').

Chapter Nineteen: Towards the tomb – and beyond, 1593–1603

1. Herrera, *Historia General*, III, 291; Bouza, 'Servidumbres', 166 (Velada on 25 July 1590) and 174.
2. Longlée, 272, to Henry III, 19 July 1586; Bouza, *Cartas*, 152, Philip to Catalina, 2 July 1587.
3. Bouza, *Cartas*, 154–5, Philip to Catalina, 12 Mar. 1588; Longlée, 367, to Henry III, 30 Apr. 1588; BAV *UL* 1115/112, 'Aviso' from Madrid, 7 Feb. 1587.
4. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, I, 257–8.
5. BL *Addl.* 28,263/560–1, Vázquez to Philip, 6 Apr. 1591, and rescript; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 139, Caetani to Aldobrandini, 20 Oct. 1594.
6. Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 44–5 and 168–9, Caetani to Aldobrandini, 8 and 16 July 1596.
7. Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología*, pp. 356–7, Gassol to Philip and rescript, 29 Sep. 1593.
8. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, 1486–8, 'La orden que se ha de guardar en la Junta que ahora he ordenado', the Escorial, 26 Sep. 1593; Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 320–4.
9. IVdeDJ 21/404, Philip to Moura, 29 Oct. 1594.
10. AGS *Estado* 176, unfol., Philip to Don Martín de Padilla, count of Santa Gadea, 3 Oct. 1596.
11. BL *Addl.* 20,929/104, Silva to Philip III, Apr. 1599.
12. *ACC*, XII, 372–7, 'Discurso' of Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, 23 Feb. 1593; *ibid.*, XVI, 166–7, Juan Vázquez de Salazar to Philip, 28 Apr. 1593.
13. *ACC*, XII, 456, procurador of Seville, 19 May 1593; *ibid.*, XVI, 170, procurador of Burgos, summarized by Juan Vázquez de Salazar, 6 May 1593.
14. *ACC*, XVI, 169 and 173, Philip to Vázquez de Salazar, 28 Apr. and 6 May 1593.
15. *ACC*, XVI, 195–7, Philip to Vázquez de Salazar, 23 July 1593; Jago, 'Taxation and political culture', 52.
16. Thompson, 'Oposición política', 45, Poza to Moura, 4 Apr. 1596.
17. Céspedes del Castillo, 'La defensa', 403; *ACC*, XVI, 415–17, and XV, pp. 45–6, Philip to the Cortes, 5 July 1596.
18. Thompson, 'Oposición política', 56, Philip to the Cortes, 27 Aug. 1596.
19. BL *Addl.* 28,378/69–73v and 75–6, Poza to Moura, 9 and 13 June 1596.
20. BL, *Addl.* 28,378/128–31, Poza to Moura, and rescript, 28/31 July 1596; Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 285, 'Relaçión y tanteo de lo que Su Magestad deve'; Drelichman and Voth, *Lending*.
21. Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 183, Caetani to Aldobrandino, 30 Nov. 1596; RAG *AB* 604, Albert to Count Frederick van den Berg, Arras, 21 Oct. 1597. Compare the deleterious effects of the Decree of 1575 on the war in the Netherlands: chapters 12 and 13 above.

22. Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 183, Caetani to Aldobrandino, 30 Nov. 1596; *ACC*, XV, 272–3, Philip to Cortes, 28 Nov. 1596.
23. BL *Addl.* 28,378/41–48v, rescript of Moura to Poza, 15 May 1596.
24. Casey, 'Spain: a failed transition', 214 and 211.
25. Alemán, *De la Vida del Pícaro Guzmán de Alfarache*, II, ii.
26. HSA *Altamira* 18/IV/3c, Yepes to Philip, 1 July 1597; and 12/I/1, No. 13, Yepes to Moura, 27 May 1598.
27. Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 291–310, describes the tortuous path to the general settlement (*Medio General*) agreed on 14 Nov.1597 and published on 14 Feb. 1598. Drelichman and Voth, *Lending*, use the loan contracts in AGS *Contadurías Generales*, legajos 84–93, to calculate the total sovereign debt affected by the 1596 Default Decree at 7,048,000 ducats. By contrast, both Philip and Poza (head of the treasury) estimated the total debt early in 1596 at 14 million ducats and claimed that 'we have already spent all His Majesty's revenues until the year 1599' (pages 346–7 above) – a claim consistent with a total debt of 14 million, but not with 7 million. Now the surviving documents of the treasury of Castile (and Poza, like Drelichman and Voth, referred only to Castile) are a labyrinth, making certainty on such matters impossible; but it seems that AGS *Contadurías Generales*, legajos 84–93, contain details only on loans from bankers who agreed to lend again under the general settlement, not to all those affected by the Default Decree. Drelichman and Voth appear to be correct that the treasury imposed a 'haircut' of 20 per cent on the 7 million ducats rescheduled by the general settlement – but overlook the probability that the king also defaulted on the other 7 million. See p. 401 note 20 above for similar doubts concerning the Default Decree of 1575.
28. Rodríguez Salgado, ' "Ni cerrando ni abriendo la puerta" ', 645 and 656, Philip to Albert, 29 July 1596 and 13 Apr. 1598.
29. Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado*, II, 258–64, Clement VIII to Prince Philip and to Albert and Isabella, 12 Apr. 1597.
30. Bouza, *Cartas*, 154–5 and 165, Philip to Catalina, 12 Mar. 1588 (she married on 11 Mar. 1585), and 6 July 1589; *DHME*, IV, 181–3 (Sepúlveda's account).
31. AGS *Estado K* 1567/64, Don Bernardino de Mendoza to Don Martín de Idiáquez, 14 Apr. 1588.
32. AGS *PR* 29/47, 'Papel de Su Magestad Católica, que aya gloria, declarando que es su voluntad', undated but Mar. 1594.
33. González Dávila, *Historia*, 17–18, Zúñiga to Philip, 1585.
34. Martínez Millán and Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 224, bishop of Guadix to Mateo Vázquez, 15 Mar. 1586.
35. ACA *CA* 36/325, consulta of the council of Aragon, 25 Mar. 1594; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 221 and 213, Caetani to Aldobrandini, 10 Sep. and 22 Jan. 1597; Danvila y Burguero, *Don Cristóbal*, 701, Don Juan de Silva to Moura, Jan. 1599.
36. González Dávila, *Historia*, 26–30; Atarés, 'Consejos instructivos', 170–2.
37. Cervera, *Testamento auténtico*, 109–16.
38. AGS *PR* 29/37, 'Papel de Su Magestad Cathólica, que aya gloria, hecho a 5 de agosto de 1598'. *FBD*, Appendix III, explains why I consider this to be the 'other paper of advice' that Philip gave his son.
39. Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 344 n. 126, Velada to Archduke Albert, 6 July 1597; Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 1.
40. Feros, *Kingship*, 48, duke of Feria to Thomas Fitzherbert, 28 Feb. 1597 and 1 June 1598; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 256, 'Aviso' from Madrid, 11 July 1598.
41. Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 354–5, Velada to Juan de Sosa, the Escorial, 10 Sep. 1598 – three days before Philip's death.
42. Eire, *From Madrid*, 269, quoting Pérez de Herrera, *Elogio*; Sigüenza, 167; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 255–6, 'Aviso' from Madrid, 11 July 1598.
43. Vargas-Hidalgo, 'Documentos', 410, from a Relation apparently sent by Moura to Archduke Albert.
44. Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 97 and 264–7, Caetani to Aldobrandini, the Escorial, 17 Aug. 1598, the same day as the audience; AGS *PR* 29/39, 'Papel de Su Magestad', 19 Aug. 1598 (on Charles V's Instruction of 1548, see chapter 2).
45. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 115–19.
46. Sigüenza, 177; Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 123; Eire, *From Madrid*, 322–47.
47. Sigüenza, 180.
48. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, II, 145–7; Sigüenza, 189.
49. Sigüenza, 189.
50. Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio auténtico*, 134; *Glorias efímeras* reproduces the thirteen surviving funeral canvases displayed in Florence.
51. BR *Ms* II–2214/68, Juan Ramírez Freile to Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, 12 Sep. 1598; Fernández Álvarez, *Madrid bajo Felipe II*, 31, resolution of the Madrid city council, 13 Sep. 1598.

52. Eire, *From Madrid*, 257 and 300–1; BR *Ms* II/2459, 'Justas poéticas celebradas en Salamanca'.
53. AM Palencia *Libro de Acuerdos, 1595–1600*, fos 362–3, resolution of 25 Sep. 1598; AM Cádiz *Ms*. 10.001, 'Libro de Acuerdos' 1596–9, fos 127–135v and 142–144v, resolutions of 22 Sep., 8, 19 and 26 Oct., and 23 and 27 Nov. 1598.
54. García Bernal, 'Las exequias', 117–18, resolution of 17 Sep. 1598; Cervantes Saavedra, 'Al túmulo del Rey Felipe II en Sevilla', based on the translation in Laskia Martin, *Cervantes*, 210.
55. Carvajal y Mendoza, *Epistolario*, 98, to Isabel de Velasco, 15 Sep. 1598; AMAE (P) *MDFDE* 239/49–93v and 417–39, Ibañez de Santa Cruz, 'Las causas de que resultó el ignorante y confuso gobierno que hubo en el tiempo del Rey nuestro señor, que sea en gloria'. See the discussion on this work in Feros, *Kingship*, 61–2.
56. Álamos de Barrientos, *Discurso político*, 27–8, 31 (this tract, although unpublished until the nineteenth century, circulated widely in manuscript).
57. Iñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, fos 85v–86, Ayala sermon on 15 Nov. 1598; Mariana, *De rege*, 359; González de Cellorigo, *Memorial*, 94.
58. *CSPV*, IX, 346, Soranzo to Doge and Senate, 27 Sep. 1598; AGS *Estado* 840/166, Padilla to Felipe III, 10 Dec. 1601.
59. Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Veleda*, 357, Velada to Juan de Sosa, 13 Sep. 1598; Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio*, 130.
60. González Dávila, *Historia*, 48; Quevedo, *Obras*, II, 438b; Bouza, 'Felipe II sube', 305; Antigua, *Desengaño*, 82–3 and 116–17.
61. Daza, *Quarta parte*, 266–7.
62. *Ibid.*, 267 (arithmetic was clearly not Daza's strong suit: five years, not four, separated the king's death in September 1598 from the vision in September 1603); dedication and pp. 137–8 (on Charles).

Epilogue

1. Iñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, sermon of Terrones, fos 16–17. (Porreño, *Dichos*, 21, quoted part of this sermon, with variations, but attributed it to Fray Antonio de León.)
2. Douais, I, 204, Fourquevaux to Charles IX, 15 Apr. 1567.
3. IVdeDJ 82/444 and 419, Sessa to Zúñiga, 28 Sep. 1600 and 9 Nov. 1602, minutes.
4. Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, 105–7 and 286–8, 'Juicio sobre Felipe II' by Camillo Caetani, Madrid, 13 Sep. 1598; Serrano, I, 316–17, Philip to Requesens, 12 Aug. 1566; AGS *Estado* 2855, unfol., 'Sumario de los quatro papeles principales que dio el presidente Richardot' and 'Lo que Su Magestad es servido que se responda a los quatro papeles' (11 Sep. 1589).
5. Diego Pérez de Mesa, *Política o razón de Estado*, quoted by Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, 336.
6. Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, VII, 397, Thomas Wilson to Walsingham, 27 Dec. 1574.
7. BZ 144/61, Vázquez to Philip, and reply, 31 May 1575.
8. Galende Díaz and Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, 238–41, Empress María to Philip, 13 Feb. 1572.
9. *CCG*, I, 314–18, Granvelle to Philip, 19 May 1566; AGS *Estado* 2843/7, consulta of the council of State, 5 Sep. 1577, opinions of the duke of Alba and Cardinal Quiroga.
10. Levi, *The drowned and the saved*, 48.
11. *BMO*, I, 62–4, Philip to Alba, 14 Sep. 1571.
12. Herrera Oria, *La Armada*, 210–14, Philip to Medina Sidonia, 1 July 1588; Raleigh, *A history of the world*, 407. See also the similar analysis by the Venetian ambassador in 1587 of why Philip refused to heed his field commanders: pp. 313–14 above.
13. BL *Addl. Ms* 28,336/76, Dr Velasco to Espinosa, 9 Aug. 1571.
14. Elliott, 'Felipe II y la monarquía española', 43–4.
15. IVdeDJ 61/325, Philip rescript to Pedro de Hoyo, undated (but early Aug. 1563); Cabié, *Ambassade*, 432–3, 'Notes diverses' by the French ambassador, Oct. 1566.
16. AGNM *Mercedes* V/248–249v, Philip to Don Martin de Velasco, 2 Feb. 1561; *BMO*, I, 64, Philip to Alba, 14 Sep. 1571.
17. *BMO*, III, 1274, Philip to Santa Cruz, 21 Oct. 1587. Brendecke, *Imperium*, provides many more examples of self-delusion: see especially chap. 7, 'Entera noticia'.
18. Botero's *Dalla Ragion di Stato* (1589) and *Relationi universali* (1591) quoted by Gil, 'Visión europea', 79.
19. Sigüenza, 99; [Eliot,] *Ortho-epia Gallica*, 44–5; ambassadors quoted by Hillgarth, *The mirror*, 96.
20. Sigüenza, 408–11, an impressive analysis of the economic impact of 'El dinero que se ha gastado en esta fábrica'.
21. Mulcahy, *Philip II*, 312 n. 2, marquis of Velada to count of Benavente, the Escorial, 25 Nov. 1590.
22. ASV *NS* 19/192, Novara to Rusticucci, 3 May 1587; BCR *Ms* 2417/39, Silva to Esteban de Ibarra, 13 Aug. 1589.

Note on Sources

1. Mercedes Noviembre, the organizing genius of the library, published a short history: *La Biblioteca de Francisco de Zabálburu*. For more details, see Llera Llorente, *La Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu*.
2. Osma, *Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan*. Osma modelled the Instituto on the Hispanic Society of America, founded in 1904 by Archer M. Huntington, with whom he 'had a friendly rivalry' for acquiring material: Proske, *Archer Milton Huntington*, 16–17. It therefore seems an amazing coincidence that each man, unknown to the other, acquired an important part of the Altamira collection.
3. Gayangos, *Catalogue*; Micheli, *Inventaire* (a catalogue modelled on that prepared by Gayangos for the British Museum collection). On the European story of the collection, see Andrés, 'La dispersión'.
4. I thank Mitchell Codding, John O'Neill and Patrick Lenaghan of the Hispanic Society of America for information, assistance with the cataloguing, and general encouragement in the 'Altamira project'. See also Rodríguez-Moñino and Brey Mariño, *Catálogo*, III, 12–52 (on Sancho Rayón), 53–106 (on the marquis de Jerez de los Caballeros) and 158 (the sale contract for the 'entire library' of the marquis, 15 Jan. 1902. In addition, BR, AHN, the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh and the Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo in Santander all hold other fragments of the Altamira collection.
5. Riba, *Correspondencia privada*, printed half of BL *Addl*. 28,263. Although he entitled it 'volume 1', Riba died soon after transcribing the material and no more volumes ever appeared.
6. Heredia Herrera, *Catálogo*, printed an analysis of over 4,000 consultas and the full text of Philip's rescripts (vol. I covers 1529–91, vol. II covers 1592–9) – but only of consultas in AGI, not those in other collections.
7. BL *Egerton* 1506, one of seven volumes of Inquisition papers purchased in 1856, contains consultas from Inquisitor-General Gaspar de Quiroga to Philip on a wide variety of issues 1574–95, with his holograph rescripts.
8. AHN *OM* 3509–3512, entitled 'Papeles curiosos', are full of papers about Philip's plans to intervene in England and France. They should be in AGS *Estado*.
9. AGS *Estado K*, the papers of the council of State concerning France, returned from Paris in 1942, have been heavily used. By contrast, documents stolen from other series, now filed in AGS *Estado* 8334–8343, have been little used, even though two detailed catalogues were made when they were still in Paris: Daumet, 'Inventaire'; and Paz, *Catálogo*. AMAE (P) still has photocopies of all the documents returned, as well as a few originals retained.
10. To sample this wonderful resource, type PARES [Portal de Archivos Españoles] into your browser and choose the option 'Búsqueda Sencilla'. Under 'Buscar' type 'Felipe II', in 'fechas' enter '1597' and '1598', and select the option 'registros digitizados'. The next screen offers different 'archivos y fondos', from which choose 'Archivo de Simancas, Patronato Real'. Eight of the 66 documents displayed are the last documents ever signed by the king, in August 1598, discussed in chapter 19 above. Wherever you live, you can now read each document online, and print out whatever interests you.
11. HHSTA *Hofkorrespondenz*, Kartons 1 and 2, contain letters from Philip and his sister Juana to their Habsburg relatives; Galende Díaz and Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, published María's holograph letters to her brother in AA; BL *Addl*. 28,264 and AGS *Estado K* 1490 contain Philip's holograph letters to the duke of Savoy, 1557–8. Giovanna Altadonna, 'Cartas', published 117 of his letters to Duke Charles Emmanuel of Savoy.
12. FCDM *AH* 166 R7–20, Philip to Feria, 7 Dec. 1558; Allinson, *A monarchy*, chaps 3 and 4. Rayne Allinson and Geoffrey Parker are preparing a scholarly edition of Mary's drafts of two letters to Philip.
13. Bouza, *Cartas*, published 39 letters written 1581–5, mostly to both daughters, and 94 written to Catalina in 1585–96. Catalina's letters, in BL *Addl.* 28,419, remain unpublished.
14. Bouza Álvarez, 'Guardar papeles', discussed the history and size of their archive, and published the inventory of the 766 legajos and 54 libros left by Zúñiga at his death in 1586.
15. March, *Niñez*, published many papers from the Arxiu about educating 'Felipito'.
16. The two 'Recueils de la correspondance de Granvelle', containing messages exchanged between the cardinal and Philip II and his closest advisers 1579–84, were BRB *MS* 9471–2 and 9473 until 1979, but in that year they became AGRB *Manuscrits Divers* 5459 and 5460, respectively. *CCG*, XII, published some of these documents, but with numerous errors of transcription. *PEG* and *CCG* published most of his correspondence in BRB, albeit with an important hiatus in 1564–5.
17. The magnificent *Epistolario del III duque de Alba* published most of the letters written by the duke, but not those he received. *CODOIN* IV and XXXVII contain many royal letters to Alba while in the Netherlands; and *CODOIN* XXXII, XXXIII and XXXV contain many more written during the Portuguese campaign. AA *cajas* 5–8 contain the duke's correspondence with Philip and *cajas* 26–56 his correspondence with others, especially during his tenure as governor-general of the Netherlands, arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

18. Maura Gamazo, *El designo*, published excerpts from the royal letters now in Santa Barbara.
19. See details in Dierickx, 'Les "Carte Farnesiane" de Naples'. Luckily, many more of Parma's papers survived than Dierickx feared and they may be consulted in ASN (albeit some are charred around the edges). Gachard's copies from ASN are in AGRB *Collection Gachard* 565, 572 and 666. Léon van der Essen copied many letters by and about Philip into his 'Cahiers'. Some are now in the university archives at Louvain-la-Neuve, but others remain in private hands.
20. Fernández Álvarez, *Testamento*, 92–3. The three surviving letters (Fernández, *Historia*, 278–9; HSA *Altamira* 18/IV/3c and 12/I/1, No. 13) are discussed in chapters 5 and 19 above.
21. Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, 1040–2, listed the various editions of Pérez's work, and discussed them in chap. 30. Alfredo Alvar Ezquerra published a critical version of the 1598 edition of *Relaciones y Cartas*. *FBD* Appendix I explains why the source is tainted.
22. Morel-Fatio, 'La vie'.
23. Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografía y memorias*, 151–210. See also Lynn, *Between court and confessional*, chap. 2.
24. Tellechea Idígoras, *Fray Bartolomé Carranza. Documentos históricos*.
25. Paris, *Négociations*; Cabié, *Ambassade*; Douais, *Dépêches*; Mousset, *Dépêches*; Brunetti and Vitale, *Corrispondenza*.
26. *State Papers Online: the Tudors, 1509–1603, Part II*, provides not only the calendars in 'searchable' form but also a link to the digitized original of each document calendared.
27. Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, 232–938; Serrano, *Correspondencia*; Voci, 'L'impresa'; Mosconi, *La nunziatura di Spagna*; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*.
28. Khevenhüller, *Diario*; Khevenhüller-Metsch and Probst-Ohstorff, *Hans Khevenhüller*.
29. BNF *Ms f.f.* 16,104–16,108 contain St Gouard's dispatches; IANTT TSO *CG livros* 209 and 210 are Pereira's own registers of his correspondence. *CSPV* contains long English summaries of the dispatches from Venetian ambassadors in Spain that concerned England.
30. Details in Kagan, *El rey recatado*.
31. Kagan, 'La Historia', 105–6, quoting from Herrera's own account of the audience, written in 1599.
32. Orazio della Rena, *Compendio della vita di Filippe secondo re di Spagna* (BNF *Ms Italien* 446): see Volpini, 'D'un silence'.

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Since more has been written about Philip II than about any other European ruler except Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolf Hitler, a comprehensive bibliography of works about him would require a book in itself. The list below provides details only for printed works cited in the notes.

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I first saw the handwriting of Philip II in the Archivo General de Simancas in July 1966 and marvelled that anyone could read it. In those days, graduate students were expected to learn palaeography 'on the job' and, although I have never had formal instruction in the matter, after almost half a century 'on the job' I have made some progress – but only thanks to the archivists who have helped me out when a word or phrase defied me. My greatest debt, one common to all historians of Habsburg Spain, is therefore to the learned archivists of Simancas. In 1592, Philip II visited Simancas and stayed in the fortress. His valet, Jehan Lhermite from Antwerp, took a tour of the archive and reported that the documents 'had been organized there so well that it is possible to find what one seeks immediately'.[1] Nothing had changed in 1966 when Ricardo Magdaleno (Director) and Asunción de la Plaza (Superintendent of the Reading Room) first welcomed me, nor yet in 2008 when I last took my leave of José Luis Rodríguez de Diego (Director) and Isabel Aguirre Landa (Superintendent of the Reading Room). Without these dedicated archivists, their colleagues and the 'researcher-friendly' method of archive management unique to Simancas, this book could never have been written.

From Simancas, in 1966 I went to Madrid and worked in the Biblioteca Nacional, the Archivo Histórico Nacional and the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan. I have returned repeatedly to each of them since then, and also carried out research in the Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, the Biblioteca Real, the Real Academia de la Historia, the Archivo de la Casa de los Duques de Alba, the Archivo de la Casa de los Marqueses de Santa Cruz and the Biblioteca de Zabálburu (formerly the Archivo de la Casa de la Condesa Viuda de Heredia Spinola). In each of them I found not only fascinating documents

1. Lhermite, *Passetemps*, I, 143.

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J. H. Plumb (as he then was) commissioned the precursor of this biography. I first met him in 1961, when he interviewed me for admission to Christ's College, Cambridge, to read History. Little did I realize then what an impact he would have on my academic life. He taught me throughout my undergraduate career, setting the standards, in his own writing and teaching, to which I still aspire. Plumb never 'let go' of his students, and he later convinced the Fellows of

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Although the Little, Brown edition of *Philip II* eventually went out of print, other publishers re-issued it. In each case, I provided a new introduction and an updated bibliography, but left the text much the same. Then in 2007, Ana Bustelo of Editorial Planeta invited me to produce a thoroughly revised edition, one that incorporated all the new primary and secondary material that had become available since 1978. We anticipated a volume perhaps twice the size of the original, but I produced a text almost five times as long and it appeared in 2010: *Felipe II. La biografía definitiva*. Given the apparently inexhaustible interest of Spanish readers in Philip, the following year Ana asked if I would produce a shorter version of the book: one with a slimmed-down apparatus criticus and only half of the original text. Robert Baldock of Yale University Press also asked me to produce an English version. I found it relatively easy to slim down the apparatus criticus, but I found murdering half my text impossible. Luckily Cameron Jones of the Ohio State University and Ruth MacKay of Stanford took on this arduous task and showed my text no mercy. I could not have produced this book without them, and I stand amazed at their editorial skills.

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Index

Aalst 227, 238
'Academy' of the duke of Alba 188
Acosta, José de 78, 110
Acuña, Hernando de 96
Acuña, Don Martín de 290
Africa 4, 40, 109, 145, 173, 201, 203, 265, 272, 311, 363, 364, 365, 381
Aguirre, Lope de 154, 396 n. 32
Álamos de Barrientos, Balthasar 360, 411 n. 56
Álava, Don Francés de 97, 376
Alba, Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, third duke of: as royal councillor 23–4, 27, 28, 31, 34, 37, 42, 46, 50, 53, 68–9, 70, 114, 154, 164, 184, 188, 189, 190, 195, 216, 229, 239, 248, 258–9, 284, 288, 294; and the Netherlands 93–4, 97, 143, 147, 150–3, 196–9, 208–14, 215, 219, 240, 245, 258, 298–9, 300, 337, 367, 372–3, 382, 396 n. 28, plate 28; and England 93–4, 205–7, 208, 209, 270–2, 273, 288, 294, 297, 298, 300, 368–9, 371; and Portugal 266, 269–71, 294, 344; archive of 382, 412 n. 17
Alba, Don Fadrique Álvarez de Toledo, fourth duke of 258–9
Albania 205
Albert, archduke (Philip II's nephew) 158, 165, 171, 343, 349
Alcalá, Fray Diego de 81, 85, 182, 185
Alcalá, Fray Julián de, 361–2, plate 45
Alcalá de Henares 12, 15, 182–3, 229, 232–3, 351
Alcalá, university in, *see* Complutense University
Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, José 202
Alcázar, Madrid, *see* Madrid Alcázar
Alcazarquivir, battle of 264–7
Alemán, Mateo 348
Alençon and Anjou, François Hercules duke of 279
Algiers 19, 42, 139, 299, 314
Alkmaar 213, 217
Almenara, Iñigo López de Mendoza, marquis of 333, 334, 336
Alpujarras, revolt of 82, 172, 201, 202, 203, 208, 215, 298, 337
Altamira archive xiv–xv, 380–1, 412 n. 4
Álvarez, Vicente 34, 35, 384
Álvarez de Toledo, don Fadrique *and* Don Fernando de, *see* Alba, dukes of
America 4, 11, 16, 45, 50, 72, 90, 91, 98, 110, 112 149, 153, 154, 155, 200, 220, 221, 245, 285, 290, 292, 297, 306, 312, 315, 357, 360, 364, 366, 373, 377, 378, 380, 381
Ana of Austria (Don John's illegitimate daughter) 173
Anguissola, Sofonisba 96, 160, plates 19, 29
Anjou, duke of *see* Alençon and Anjou
Anne of Austria (Philip II's fourth wife) 12, 40, 117, 158, 160, 164, 165, 168, 183, 186, 187, 191, 195, 198, 199, 271, 276
Antigua, Sor María de la 361
Antonio, Don, Pretender to the Portuguese throne 267, 268, 270, 271, 273, 280, 306, 337
Antwerp 88, 142, 151, 216, 222, 226, 238, 280, 378, 384, plates 7, 15, 16
Aragon xv, 4, 6, 8, 12, 16, 19, 31, 42, 50, 65, 66, 103, 127, 161, 172, 174, 183, 184, 200, 228, 229, 248, 251, 256, 271, 285, 291, 292, 298, 326, 328, 360, 374, 381; revolt of, 333–40, 341, 354, 374, 383, plate 42; *see also* Pérez, Antonio
Aragón, Hernando de, archbishop of Zaragoza and viceroy of Aragon 172
Aramaic 16, 88
Aranjuez 18, 101, 102, 103, 108, 109, 110, 151, 153, 161, 164, 165, 171, 196, 285, 292
Arévalo 12, 181
Arias Montano, Benito 88
Armada, Spanish 68, 95, 99, 115, 118, 297, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 330, 331, 344, 360, 365, 368, 369, 372, 378, 381, 394 n 57, 411 n. 12
Armenteros, Judge (*alcalde de Casa y Corte*) 84
Army of Flanders, Spanish 223, 277, 308, 309, 310, 321
Arras, bishop of, *see* Perrenot de Granvelle, Antoine
Artois 37
Asculi, prince of 117, 118

assassination attempts against Philip 293–4
Asturias 202
Atlantic 95, 151, 153, 218, 219, 229, 266, 270, 273, 276, 312, 344
Augsburg 35, 39, 40, 41
Augustine, Saint xviii
Augustus, Roman emperor 4
Ávila 69, 86, 333
Ávila, Juan de 81
Ávila, Teresa de 81, 86, 97, 295, 406
Ayala, Fray Lorenzo de 360
Azores 115, 271, 273, 275, 277, 278, 312, 374, plate 38
Aztec empire 4

Babington, Anthony 311
Badajoz 107, 270, 294, 375
Badoer, Alberto 165
Bahamas 154
Barahona, Juan de 46, 388 n. 13
Barajas 287
Barajas, Don Francisco Zapata y Cisneros, count of, president of the council of Castile 309, 328
Barcelona 3, 8, 10, 12, 40, 234, 251, 271, 294, 298, 299, 381
Bayonne, conference at 144, 146, 147, 154, plate 29
Béarn 334, 336, 338
Berg, Count William van den 209, 210
Bergen, Jean de Glymes, marquis of 37, 148
Bergerac, peace of, 245
Bertendona, Martin de 317, 331
Bible 16, 75, 81, 88, 355, plates 15 and 16
Bilbao 154
Binche 114
Bío Bío river 200
Bizerta 216, 221, 224
Blois (Blosius), Louis de 355
Blomberg, Barbara (Don John's mother) 33, 135
Bobadilla, Don Francisco de 288, 336, 337, 376
Bolea, Bernardo de 291, 390
Borja, Francisco de, fourth duke of Gandía and later Jesuit General, 22, 71, 78, 172, 188, 335
Bosque de Segovia, El 101, 114, 162, 190
Botero, Giovanni 372
Brabant, duchy of 37, 146, 209, 211, 227, 307
Braganza, duke of 267
Breda 225, 227, 366
Brussels 35, 37, 39, 42, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 57, 114, 121, 126, 134, 136, 137, 138, 140, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 152, 153, 156, 185, 186, 196, 197, 198, 206, 209, 214, 226, 227, 231, 234, 235, 236, 242, 243, 244, 246, 258, 280, 297, 298, 299, 300, 308, 309, 313, 349, 357, 372, 376, 377, 378
Burghley, Lord, *see* Cecil, William
Burgos 30, 135, 338
Burgundy, duchy of 4, 56, 180, 186, 364
Burgundy, county of, *see* Franche Comté of Burgundy

Cabezón, Antonio 18
Cabrera de Córdoba, Luis 30, 80, 86, 132, 207, 286, 291, 384, 398 n. 8, plate 13
Cádiz 172, 269, 270, 312, 315, 320, 344–6, 358, 366
Caesar, Julius 16
Caetani, Camillo 68, 342, 354, 384
Calais 54, 56, 121, 125, 320, 321
Calvete de Estrella, Juan Cristóbal 15, 16, 34, 37, 112, 384
Cambrai 52
Campanella, Tommaso 99
Canaries 306
Cantabria 153, 218, 348
Canto del mío Cid, see Song of El Cid
Cape Finisterre 318
Cape Verde Islands 306
Caraffa, Gian Pietro, *see* Paul IV
Carlos Lorenzo (son of Philip II and Anne) 166, 167
Carranza de Miranda, Fray Bartolomé 40, 46, 48, 49, 52, 130–4, 153, 159, 178, 182, 291, 325, 378, 379, 383, 395 n. 26; plate 26
Carlos, Don (son of Philip II and María Manuela), birth and upbringing 30, 40, 85, 102, 123, 130, 181–2, 395 n. 26; education of 102, 130, 136, 145, 182, 191, 398 n. 22, plate 35; marriage plans 56, 125, 183, 186, 187, 190–1; as prince 136, 161, 173, 185, 187–8, 293; erratic behaviour, 155, 156, 179–87, 351; arrest and imprisonment of 82, 155, 159, 175–9, 189–90, 195, 370; and Isabel de Valois 125, 159, 190; afterlife 75, 164, 174, 175, 191, 370, 398 n. 2, plate 22
Caribbean 4, 154, 306, 311, 374
Carvajal y Mendoza, Luisa de 359
Casa de Campo 75, 108, 109, 136
Cascais 270, 310
Casey, James 348
Castiglione, Baldassare 295
Castile, kingdom of: core of the Spanish monarchy 31, 41, 43, 64, 65, 69, 71, 72, 73, 83, 84, 85, 90, 91, 97, 136, 139, 150, 155, 174, 185–89, 219–21, 227, 269, 271, 274, 347; census in 112; disease in 287, 348, 360; Moriscos in, 201–3, 278; unification with Portugal 267–68; unrest in 12, 13, 16, 19, 25, 215, 259, 332–3, 341, 345–9, 359–61, 365; *see also* Cortes of Castile
Castro, Fray Alonso de 40
Castro, Don Rodrigo de, archbishop of Seville 253, 307
Catalina Michaela, infanta (daughter of Philip II and Isabel), 13, 115, 153, 163, 165, 167, 168, 267, 279, 341, 342, 350, 382, 383, 397 n. 33, 412 n. 13, plate 32
Catalonia 6, 16, 31, 34, 340
Cateau-Cambrésis, peace of 123, 125, 128, 137, 138, 349, 365
Catherine de' Medici, queen regent of France 144, 161, 162, 163, 279, 382
Catherine, queen of Portugal (Philip II's aunt) 177, 178, 189, 382
Catholic monarchs, *see* Ferdinand the Catholic *and* Isabella the Catholic
Caverel, Philippe de 282, 284

Cazorla 348
Cebu, Philippines 399 n. 33
Cecil, William, Lord Burghley 118
Cellorigo, *see* González de Cellorigo
Cervantes, Miguel de 204, 359
Céspedes del Castillo, Guillermo 346
Channel, English 43, 47, 55, 95, 218, 242, 307, 308, 309, 310, 312, 313, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 372
Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor (Philip II's father): inheritance 4–8, 180; marriage 3–4, 8, 58; and mother 189, 191; and Philip xv, 10, 12–15, 19–25, 26–34, 35–40, 41–4, 49–51, 54, 57–8, 104, 106, 125, 127–8, 130, 159, 299, 387 n. 2; illegitimate children 135–6, 172, 231; and England, 43–5; and Moriscos xx, 201; heritage of 141, 174, 215, 231, plates 3 and 8
Charles IX, king of France 86, 117, 208, 209, 211, 378
Charles, Archduke of Styria 350
Chaves, Fray Diego de 40, 83–4, 252, 290, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 334, 338, 344, 383, 408 n. 9
Chichimecas 200
Chile 200
China 311
Chinchón, Don Pedro de Cabrera, second count of 46
Chinchón, Don Diego Fernández de Cabrera, third count of 285, 288, 336, 337
Cicero 16
Cifuentes, Don Juan Baltazar de Silva, sixth count of 292
Clausewitz, Carl von 99
Clement VIII, pope 92, 357
Coello, Doña Juana 229, 326, 403 n. 6, *see also* Pérez, Antonio
Cohen, Eliot xvii
Coimbra 270
Coligny, Gaspard de 208, 211
Como, cardinal of 234
Complutense University 15, 111, 132, 182–3, 229
Compromise, the 148, 151, 152, 196
Comunero rebellion 8, 13, 30, 201, 215
Constantinople 138, 144, 145, 147, 216, 218, 223, 242, 244, 264, 271
Córdoba 201, 294, 400 n. 17
Córdoba, Don Diego de 74, 75, 116, 164, 247, 271
Corfu 204
Cornwall 318
Corsica 43
Cortes of Castile 8, 13, 31, 41, 150, 161, 169, 183, 185, 189, 220, 221, 271, 317, 330, 331, 339, 345, 346, 347, 365, 376
Cortés, Don Martín, marquis del Valle 154, 155
Corunna 45, 95, 310, 318, 319, 320, 331
council of Castile 19, 64, 65, 69, 71, 72, 73, 84, 91, 97, 220, 257, 260, 262, 269, 274, 287, 289, 291, 293, 296, 309, 326, 342, 358; *see also* Cortes of Castile
council of Finance 67, 68, 72, 77, 98, 278, 291, 346
council of the Indies 72, 98, 102, 154, 220, 288, 290, 311, 315
council of the Inquisition, *see* Suprema
council of Italy 64–5, 260
council of Trent, *see* Trent, council of
council of Troubles 196, 198, 208, 215, 382
council of War 72
Covarrubias, Don Diego de 71, 220
Cranmer, Thomas 49
Crete 204, 205
Cyprus 203, 204, 212

Dacre, Lady Magdalen 117, 394 n. 53
Danube river 6
David, king of Israel 271, 281
Daza, Fray Antonio de 362, 411 n. 62
Default Decrees (*Decretos de Suspensión*) 53, 221, 224–6, 235, 245, 347, 349
Delgado, Juan 265, 266, 269
Den Brielle 209, 210
Denmark 144, 148
Descalzas Reales, convent of the 159, 163, 170, 171, 340, 350, 351
Deventer, Jacob van 111
Diego, prince (son of Philip II and Anne) 167, 169, 170
Dietrichstein, Baron Adam von 183, 184, 384
Djerba (island of, also called Los Gelves) 138, 140, 141
Dominican Order 49
Donà, Leonardo 61, 70, 75–6, 78, 79, 100, 295, 296, 299, 378, 383, plate 12
Donlope, Miguel 338
Doria, Gian (Juan) Andrea 204, 383, 400
Dovara, Luigi 253, 274, 275
Dover 55, 308
Drake, Sir Francis 280–1, 305–7, 309, 311, 312, 315, 331
Drelichman, Mauricio 390 n 15, 401 n. 20, 410 n 27
Dudley, Lord Robert, later earl of Leicester 53, 306
Duffy, Eamon 57
Dunkirk 313, 320
Dutch Revolt 37, 76, 82, 144, 150, 151, 209, 213, 215, 229, 231, 334

Éboli, Ana de Mendoza y de la Cerda, princess of (widow of Ruy Gómez de Silva) 97, 173, 229, 247, 248, 252, 254, 256–8, 259, 261–3, 273, 274, 275, 288–9, 293, 325, 328, 329, 403 n. 17, 24; 404 n. 42; *see also* Pérez, Antonio
Edward VI, king of England and Ireland 43
Egmont, Lamoral, count of 37, 43, 45, 55, 56, 128, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149, 152, 196, 198
Eire, Carlos 356, 358
Eleanor, queen of France (Philip II's aunt) 156
El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos) 96
Eliot, John 106, 374
Elizabeth I, queen of England (Philip's sister-in-law): accession of 55–6, 57, 156; Philip seeks to marry 121–5, 164, 237, 277; break with Rome 57, 126, 156; Philip makes peace with 222–3; and the Netherlands 243,

280, 306, 308, 315, 331, 344, 349; Spanish plans to depose xvi, xvii–xviii, 93–5, 97, 99, 205–7, 230–1, 236–8, 241–2, 243–5, 273, 280, 305–21, 330–1, 344, 366, 368, 371–3; attacks Spain 280–1, 305–6, 331, 344–5; correspondence of 382
Elliott, Sir John 371
England, kingdom of, Philip's policy toward 14, 25, 43–5, 62, 86; rise of Protestantism in, 130, 133, 134, 144, 148, 150; under King Philip 45–52, 54–7, 85–6, 92–3, 156, 168; Spanish plans to invade xvi, xvii–xviii, 93–5, 97, 99, 108, 113, 205–7, 230–1, 236–8, 241–2, 243–5, 273, 280, 305–21, 330–1, 344, 366, 368, 371–3; *see also* Elizabeth I, queen
Enriquez, Antonio 250, 251, 325, 326, 328, 403 n. 24
Enriquez, Don Martín 200
Enterprise of England xvi, xvii–xviii, 93–5, 97, 99, 205–7, 230–1, 236–8, 241–2, 243–5, 273, 280, 305–21, 330–1, 344, 366, 368, 371–3
Erasmus, Desiderius 16, 37
Eraso, Francisco de 54, 70, 102, 143, 285, 291, 389 n. 39, 395 n. 43, 396 n. 4
Ernest (Philip II's nephew) 158, 384
Escobedo, Bartolomé de 96
Escobedo, Juan de 69, 228, 229–34, 236–43, 245–61, 263, 274, 290, 293, 294, 324–29, 334, 354, 383, 392, 402 n. 44, 403 nn. 17, 20
Escobedo, Pedro de 257, 260, 288, 290, 327
El Escorial, *see* San Lorenzo de El Escorial
Espinosa, Cardinal Diego de 71, 72,151, 165, 188, 195–6, 199–200, 201, 203–4, 220, 288, 380, 386, 390 n. 29, plate 30
Espinosa, Gabriel de 173, plate 34
Espinosa, Juan Fernández, *see* Fernández de Espinosa
Esquivel, Pedro de 111
Essex, Robert Devereux, earl of 118
Extremadura 45, 203, 269, 270

Farnese, Alexander, prince of Parma *see* Parma, Alexander Farnese
Ferdinand I, (Charles V's brother) 13, 14, 32, 39, 40, 41, 42, 50, 137, 156, 364
Ferdinand the Catholic, king of Aragon (Philip's great-grandfather) 4, 6, 10, 21, 64, 172, 180, 294
Fernández de Espinosa, Juan 67, 77
Fernando, prince of Spain (first son of Philip and Anne of Austria) 165–7, 257, 292; plate 30
Fernando, Philip II's brother 8, 10
Feria, Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, count and later duke of 34, 55, 121, 133, 383
Ficino, Marsilio 29
Finale Ligure 207–8, 367, 373
Flanders, province of 37, 146, 211, 307, 310, 311, 312, 317, 320–1, 330, 359, 363; French invasion of, 55–6; religious state of 126, 144, 149; *see also* Netherlands
Florida 153, 154, 208, 218, 297, 371, 373
Flower, William 49
Flushing 209, 210
Fonseca, Don Alonso de 12
Fourquevaux, Raymond de Pavie, Baron 79, 155, 162, 176, 177, 184, 187, 188, 190, 299, 378, 383
France, kingdom of: and Charles V 3, 4, 6, 8, 13–14, 23, 26–7, 42, 44, 49, 50, 201; and Philip II 51–3, 55–6, 76, 82, 86, 95, 97, 99, 108, 123, 125–6, 137, 139, 144, 148, 150, 151, 153–4, 161, 163, 207, 216, 266, 272, 301, 314, 315, 322, 335–7, 340, 345, 347–8, 359, 360, 364–5, 366, 372, 373, 374; and Dutch Revolt 151, 175, 208, 211; religious situation in 208–9, 245, 272, 279, 280, 301, 331, 352, 373; diplomatic relations with Spain 297, 299, 300, 383, 412 n 8, 9; peace with Spain 349, 365–6
Franche-Comté of Burgundy 4
Francis I, king of France 3, 6, 13, 14, 19, 27
Francis II, king of France and Scotland 126
Franco, Francisco 109, 393 n. 28
Fresneda, Fray Bernardo de 46, 182, 185, 199–200
Freud, Sigmund 369–72
Friesland, province of 211, 300
Fugger, Anton 186

Galapagar 374
Galicia 69, 202, 203, 281, 305, 306, 307, 331
Gandía, Francisco de Borja, fourth duke of, *see* Borja, Francisco de
Gandía, Carlos de Borja, fifth duke of 335
García de Toledo, Álvaro 262, 263, 273
Gassol, Jerónimo 343, 344, 380
Gayangos, Pascual de xv, 384, 412 n. 3
Gaztelu, Martín de 102, 400 n. 17
Geertruidenberg 243
Gelderland 37, 209, 210, 211, 378
Gelves, Los, *see* Djerba
General Settlement of royal debts, *see Medio General*
Genoa, republic of 34, 66, 125, 187, 207, 226, 234, 297, 383, 384
Gérard, Balthasar 250, 279
Gérard, Véronique 136
Germany 6, 8, 31, 40, 91, 149, 151, 185, 191, 298, 381
Ghent 128, 135, 149, 227, 238, 244, 280
Ghent, Pacification of 227, 238, 241, 242, 244
Gilbert, Sir Humphrey 297
Golden Fleece, Order of the 15, 128, 135, 140, 172, 295, plates 8, 32
Gómez de Silva, Ruy xvi, 30, 34, 37, 46, 51, 68, 69, 76, 97, 117, 143, 144, 150, 158, 176, 184, 185, 188, 220, 229, 239, 247, 254, 256, 275, 288, 293, 394 n. 54, 397 n. 11; *see also* Éboli, princess of
González de Cellorigo, Martín 361
Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, José Luis 30, 388 n. 14
Gouda, 53, 93, plate 17
Gracián y Dantisco, Antonio 73, 102, 116, 288, 380
Granada xvii, xviii, 3, 71, 98, 103, 104, 187, 195, 197, 201, 202
Granada, war of, *see* Alpujarras
Granada, Fray Luis of 81, 355

Granvelle, Cardinal, *see* Perrenot de Granvelle, Antoine
Gravelines, battle of 56, 125, 128, 145, 365
Greece 205
Gregory XIII, pope 89, 92, 134, 230, 242, 267, 272, 277
Groenendaal, convent of 57, 58, 121
Guadalajara 28, 135
Guadalupe 81, 105, 264
Guadarrama mountains 104, 284, 348
Guatemala 154
Guise, François of Lorraine, duke of 245, 248, 250, 279, 314, 402 n. 49
Guzmán el Bueno, Don Alonso Pérez de, *see* Medina Sidonia
Guzmán, Doña Eufrasia de 117–18
Guzmán, Doña Magdalena de 258–9
Guzmán de Alfarache (De la vida del picaro), novel 348
Guzmán de Silva, Diego 288

Haarlem 211, 212, 213, 373
Hainaut 37, 210
Henry II, king of France 41, 50, 54, 125, 126
Henry III, king of France 279, 314, 331, 372, 373
Henry IV, king of Castile 259
Henry IV, king of France and Navarre 92, 208, 210, 331, 348, 349, 366, 383
Henry VII, king of England 307
Henry VIII, king of England 57, 386
Henry, cardinal, regent and later king of Portugal 265–8
Henry of Navarre, *see* Henry IV, king of France
Hernández, Francisco 110
Herrera, Fernando de 96
Herrera, Juan de 103, 105, 112
Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de xviii, 188, 341, 384
Holbeek, Francis 109
Holland, province of 37, 93, 209, 210, 211, 213, 217, 218, 225, 227, 242, 244, 273, 309; *see also* Dutch Revolt and Netherlands
Holy League 164, 173, 203, 204, 205, 206, 209, 229, 296
Holy Roman Emperor, *see* Ferdinand I, Maximilian I, Maximilian II, Rudolf II
Holy Roman Empire 35, 39, 40, 125, 363, 364, 373
Hornes, Philippe de Montmorency, count of 37, 143, 148, 149–50, 152, 196, 198, 199, 396 n. 4
Howell, James 106, 107
Hoyo, Pedro de 46, 74, 116
Hungary 8, 13, 37, 39, 42, 44, 49, 50, 57, 58, 150, 156, 172, 201, 382

Ibáñez de Santa Cruz, Iñigo 359, 360, 411 n. 55
Iconoclastic Fury 149, 152, 300
Idiáquez, Don Juan de 68, 97, 188, 285, 288, 316, 405 n. 38
Imperial Vicar (in Italy) 39, 50, 53, 62, 65
Inca 4, 200; *see also* Peru
Incest 180
Inquisition, Spanish 25, 65, 72, 85, 91, 130, 131, 132, 133, 148, 200, 223, 290, 291, 293, 328, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 340, 357, 361, 381, 383, 395 n. 32, 412 n. 7, plate 26
Inquisitor-General 12, 13, 66, 71, 75, 129, 130, 132, 133, 134, 223, 239, 291, 296; *see also* Espinosa, Diego de, Valdés, Fernando de, *and* Quiroga, Gaspar de
Insausti, assassin of Escobedo 251
Ireland 43, 44, 56, 74, 121, 123, 242, 272, 273, 309, 310, 314, 321, 322, 344, 365, 372
Isabel of France, queen of Castile (Philip II's third wife) xvi, 46, 75, 117, 125, 136, 144, 153, 155, 156, 158, 159, 160–63, 168, 175, 190, 195
Isabella, Empress (Philip II's mother) 3–4, 8–10, 181, 370
Isabella the Catholic, queen of Castile 6, 10, 11–12, 21
Isabella Clara Eugenia, infanta (daughter of Philip II and Isabel) 81, 92, 153, 162, 165, 171, 349, 355, 382, plate 32
Isle of Wight 314, 321
Istanbul, *see* Constantinople
Italy 3, 4, 8, 39–41, 43, 150–1, 168, 173, 186–7, 230, 235, 241; Philip II and 32–5, 40, 43, 45, 50, 53, 62, 65, 98, 102, 125, 138, 201, 207–8, 216, 224, 226, 240–4, 262–3, 267, 285, 297, 335, 360, 363, 364, 381; culture of 102, 160; support for the Enterprise of England, 230–1, 241–44, 273, 311; and Antonio Pérez 248, 260, 262, 274–5, 334; *see also* Milan; Naples; papacy and Sicily
Italy, council of, *see* council of Italy

Jeronimite Order 103, 105, 108
Jerusalem 111, 138, 267
Jesuit Order 78, 89, 97, 110, 159
Jesús, Teresa de, *see* Ávila, Teresa de
John II, king of Castile 259
John of Austria, Don (Philip II's half-brother) xv, 69, 80, 86, 97, 111, 135–6, 156, 162, 167, 172–3, 187, 191, 201–2, 204–5, 216, 223–5, 227, 228, 229, 230–46, 247–58, 260, 371, 384, 402 n. 49
John, prince of Portugal 14, 42
jousts, 9, 11–12, 28–9, 35, 37, 40, 114, 126, 136, plate 6
Juan, Honorato 16, 102
Juana, princess of Portugal (Philip's sister) 10, 14, 40, 42, 45, 50, 51, 53, 57, 73, 97, 104, 106, 117, 126–7, 128, 130–2, 135, 136, 156, 158, 159–60, 163, 172, 179, 229, 412 n. 11
Juana, queen of Castile (Philip II's grandmother) 6, 8, 180–1, 189, 191, 351
Juana of Austria (Don John's illegitimate daughter) 173–4, 232
Junta de Gobierno 343, 344, 352
Junta de Noche 285, 343, 382
Junta de Obras y Bosques 64, 381
Junta de Policía 332
Junta Grande 343

Junta Magna 199, 200, 400 n. 14
Junta of Presidents 220, 401, n. 18
Justiciar of Aragon 334, 335, 336

Kamen, Henry xvii, 117, 386 n. 8
Kent 310, 314
Khevenhüller, Hans 170–1, 305–6, 314–15, 384, 427, plate 30

La Casilla 230, 253, 274
La Fresneda 109
La Mancha 258
La Rochelle 208, 209
Ladrada, Don Alonso de la Cueva, marquis of 73, 164, 165, 166, plate 30
Laloo, Alonso de 149–50
Lanuza, Juan de, Justiciar of Aragon 334–6
Larache 266, 267, 314
Laredo 187
Las Casas, Fray Bartolomé de 16
Las Infantas, Fernando de 97
Latin 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 28, 47, 88, 91, 110, 112, 198, 276, 358, 382, 384
Latrás, Lupercio 333, 351
Lavaña, Juan Bautista 112
Lepazpi, *see* López de Legazpi
Leicester, earl of, *see* Dudley
León, kingdom of 203
Leone, Pompeo 96, 106, 174, 190, plate 22
Lepanto, battle of 79, 96, 98, 99, 165, 173, 195, 203, 204, 205, 229, 273, 292, 299, 373
Lerma, Don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Zúñiga, third count of 189, 190
Lerma, Don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, marquis of Denia and first duke of 351, 353, 359
Levi, Primo 367
Lhermite, Jehan 81, 106, 107, 109, 114, 340, 355, 356, 370, 378, 384, 385; plates 24, 25, 42, 44
Lima, Peru 200
Lippomano, Hieronimo 62–3, 313–14, 315–16
Lisbon 113, 115, 170, 173, 178, 265, 267, 268, 270, 271, 272, 273, 275, 282, 284, 294, 297, 306, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 320, 331, 345, 378
Liverpool 230
Llull, Ramon 109
Lombardy 4, 27, 150, 174, 213, 232, 233, 234, 237, 254; *see also* Milan
London 55, 114, 121, 277, 293, 297, 299, 308, 309, 310, 345, 372, 377, 378, 381
Longlée, Pierre de Ségusson, lord of 341, 342, 378, 383
López de Legazpi, Miguel 399 n. 33
López de Velasco, Juan 111–12
Loreto 81
Lorraine 41, 42, 125
Los Cobos, Francisco de 13, 14, 19, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, 288
Los Vélez, Don Pedro Fajardo, marquis of 239, 249, 250, 256, 329, 402 n. 28
Louis IX, king of France 322
Low Countries, *see* Netherlands
Loaysa Girón, García de 351–2
Lucas, George 398 n. 2
Lucca, republic of 374, 383, 384
Ludolf of Saxony, 'The Carthusian' 10, 81
Luna, Álvaro de 259
Luna, Don Francisco de Gurrea y Aragón, count of 34, 137, 338
Luther, Martin 4, 362
Lutherans 8, 35, 40, 129, 130
Luxemburg 150, 151, 237, 245
Lyons 299

Machiavelli, Niccolò 29
Madrid 8, 18, 19, 20, 23, 40, 41, 53, 64, 72, 75, 77, 78, 79, 100, 102, 105, 112, 113, 114–15, 116, 135, 136, 137, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 170, 177, 182, 195, 198, 229, 247–9, 251, 253–5, 258, 260–3, 264, 270, 271, 273, 274, 282, 285, 289, 309, 319, 327, 330, 332–3, 340, 343, 348, 353, 357–8, 380–1
Madrid Alcázar 64, 86, 103, 112, 115, 136, 159, 164, 165, 175, 176, 178, 185, 188, 226, 247, 258, 261, 262, 278, 285, 333, 340, 351, plate 27
Magellan, Fernando 321, 408 n. 35
Maleguzzi, Orazio 248
Mallorca 8
Malta 139, 146, 147, 173, 273
Man, Dr John 175, 191, 205
Mandatos xvii, xviii, 201; *see also* Moriscos
Manrique de Lara, Doña Inés 9
Mantua, duchy of 34, 125, 186, 187, 377, 383, 384
Manuel, king of Portugal 267
Manuel, Don Rodrigo 262, 263
Marchena 361
Margaret of Parma, *see* Parma, Margaret
Margarita, archduchess (Philip II's niece) 170–1, 340, 350
Margarita, archduchess (Philip II's daughter-in-law) 351, 354
Margarita island 154–5
Margate 308, 310, 312, 313
Margot of Valois, princess of France 208, 209, 210
María, princess (daughter of Philip II and Anne) 167, 170
María Manuela of Portugal, princess (Philip II's first wife) 19, 21–2, 30, 156, 162, 177, 181, 370
María, Holy Roman Empress (Philip II's sister) 8, 9, 13–14, 27, 31, 33, 39, 40, 45, 106, 156–60, 164, 170–2, 178–9, 183–4, 186–7, 207–8, 351, 367, 382, 398 n. 8
Mariana, Juan de 360
Marliano, Giovanni 264, 265, 266, 271, 272
Martínez del Guijo, Juan, *see* Silíceo
Martínez, Diego 250, 251, 327, 408 n. 7
Mary, duchess of Burgundy (Philip II's great-grandmother) 4, 180, 186
Mary, queen of Hungary (Philip II's aunt) 13, 37–9, 42, 44, 49, 50, 57–8, 114, 156, 172, 382, plate 5
Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland 93–4, 123, 126, 174, 205–7, 230, 243, 277, 280, 309, 311, 315, 370

Mary Tudor, queen of England and Ireland (Philip II's second wife) 14, 39, 43–9, 51–2, 54–8, 93, 117, 121–2, 123, 125, 128, 149, 153, 156, 293–4, 299, 307, 364, 372, 382, plate 17, figure 6
Mascarenhas, Doña Leonor de 9
Mauriño de Pazos, Don Antonio 69, 262, 274, 275, 289
Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor (Philip II's great-grandfather) 4, 6, 90, 104, 172, 186–7, 399 n. 26
Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor (Philip II's brother-in-law) 33–4, 39, 40–1, 45, 155, 156, 157, 178–9, 180, 183–4, 186, 190–1, 207–8, 382
Maximilian of Austria (Emperor Maximilian I's illegitimate son) 90, 172
McNamara, Robert 62
Mechelen 141, 142, 211, 212, 280
Medina Sidonia, Don Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, seventh duke of 68, 289, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 344, 369, 378, 382, 407 n. 23
Medinaceli, Don Juan de la Cerda, duke of 46, 137, 138, 378, 383
Medio General 235–6, 245–6, 401 n. 20, 410 n. 27
Mediterranean 8, 34, 42, 43, 75, 107, 116, 137, 138, 139, 140, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 150, 172, 203, 204, 212, 213, 216, 219, 224, 228, 229, 230, 242, 244, 265, 266, 267, 271, 289, 300, 306, 312, 366, 374, 381, 383
Melanchthon, Philip 16
Mendoza, House of 69
Mendoza, Doña Ana de, *see* Éboli
Mendoza, Don Bernardino de 280
Mendoza, Diego de 68
Mendoza, Francisco de 287
Mendoza, Pablo de 113
Menéndez de Avilés, Pedro 154, 218, 373
Mérida 270
Messianic Imperialism 91–9, 139, 171, 258, 267, 365–9, 371–2
Messina 4, 204, 299
Metz 41, 42, 54
Mexico, viceroyalty of 3, 62, 112, 116, 154, 155, 187, 200, 201, 357, 363, 371, 376, 381–3, 399 n. 33
Michelangelo di Lodovici Buonarroti 103
Milan 6, 13, 14, 27, 28, 31, 34, 56, 140, 151, 187, 208, 216, 223, 232, 234, 298, 367, 381, 387, 389, 395, 401; *see also* Lombardy
Milford Haven 309
Miranda de Ebro 338
Mirandola, Pico de la 29
Moderation, the 148
Mombasa 311
Moncontour, battle of 299
Mondéjar, Don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, marquis of 255, 288
Mons 210, 211
Montague, viscountess, *see* Dacre
Montigny, Floris de Montmorency, baron of 143, 148, 153, 198, 199, 202, 290, 338
Montmorency, Philippe de, *see* Hornes
Monty Python's Flying Circus 395 n. 32
Montserrat 81, 356
Mook, battle of 216
Mor, Antonis 39, 53
Morillon, Maximilian 209, 211
Moriscos (Spanish Christians of Moorish descent) xvii, 71, 82, 137, 195, 197, 200, 206, 215, 333, 339; deportation of 201–2, 208, 278
Morisote, Luis de 186
Morosini, Giovanfrancesco 62, 64, 82, 268–9
Moura, Don Cristóbal de 68, 188, 267, 268, 269, 285, 316, 317, 319, 333, 343, 344, 346, 347–9, 352, 360
Mulcahy, Rosemarie 106
Muñoz, Andrés 46, 384
Muntanyeses of Aragon 333
Mur, Rodrigo de 338
Murcia 293, 348
Murillo, Bartolomé Esteban 362
Muslims in Spain, *see* Moriscos

Naarden 211, 212
Naples xv, 4, 6, 28, 32, 34, 45, 53, 56, 73, 90, 140, 150, 173, 174, 232, 233, 237, 254, 266, 287, 288, 290, 298, 311, 364, 367, 377, 381, 383
Narváez, Luis de 18
Nassau, Count Louis of 208, 210, 216, 221
Nassau, William of, *see* Orange
Navacerrada 348
Navarre 6, 16, 279, 339
Navarre, Henry king of, *see* Henry IV of France
Netherlands, the: archives of 381, 382; culture of 102, 108, 109, 111, 114, 133–4, 141–2, 144–51, 355; Charles V and 3, 4, 6, 12, 13–14, 27–8, 33, 35–43, 45, 49–50, 364; England and 243, 280, 306, 308, 313, 315, 331, 344, 349; France and 208–9, 278; Philip II and xv, xviii, 35–45, 46, 47, 49–50, 58, 62, 68, 70, 74, 75, 77, 81, 83, 84, 86, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 99, 102, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114, 123, 125–9, 130, 136, 138–9, 140–53, 154–5, 157, 163, 167, 172, 173, 175, 176, 181, 185, 195, 196–9, 201, 205, 207, 208, 209–12, 213–27, 228–9, 230–46, 249, 253, 258–9, 264, 265, 266, 269–71, 272, 277, 278–80, 284, 289, 297, 298–9, 300, 305, 306–8, 330, 331, 336–7, 340, 345, 347, 349, 360, 365, 366, 367, 372–3, 374, 384; religious state of 91, 92, 98, 125–6, 355; *see also* Dutch Revolt; Flanders *and* Holland.
'New France', *see* Florida
New Spain, *see* Mexico
Newfoundland 280
Norfolk, Thomas Howard, duke of 206–7
North Sea 43
Northwest Passage 297

Olivares, Don Enrique de Guzmán, count of 34, 46, 277
Olivares, Don Gaspar de Guzmán, count-duke of 380
Oosterweel, battle of 151
Oporto 270

Oran 139, 143, 258, 273
Orange, William of Nassau, prince of 37, 49, 128, 140, 141, 142, 143, 148, 151, 152, 153, 191, 196, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 215, 216, 217, 225, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 250, 270, 279, 293, 337, 373, 394 n. 54
Orléans, Charles of Valois, duke of 27, 28
Ormanetto, Nicholas 236, 242, 384
Osorio, Doña Isabel 30, 40, 117, 394 n. 54
Ottoman empire 3, 4, 6, 40, 62, 138, 139, 143, 146, 147, 150, 164, 173, 187, 195, 201, 203, 204, 205, 213, 216, 221, 223, 224, 228, 240, 242, 264, 266, 290, 299, 306, 365, 373
Ovando, Juan de 98, 220–1, 224, 225, 288, plate 36
Overijssel 37, 211
Oxford University 57

Padilla, Don Antonio de 288, 344, 361, 406 n. 18
Padilla, Don Martín de 344, 361
Palencia 358
papacy 4, 6, 51, 85–6, 89, 92, 121, 134, 204, 206, 207, 272, 291–92, 296, 299, 305, 335, 339, 357, 360
Paracuellos de Járama xviii, 361–2
Pardo, El xv, 100, 102, 103, 108, 110, 165, 169, 285, 286, 292
Paris 10, 27, 68, 79, 97, 211, 255, 279, 297, 299, 300, 314, 383
Parma, Margaret, duchess of (Philip II's half-sister) 97, 128, 136, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 156, 172, 173, 185, 198, 223, 235, 241, 383
Parma, Alexander Farnese, prince and duke of (Philip II's nephew), 94, 172, 277, 307, 312, 313, 331, 407 n. 11
Pastrana, duchy of 97, 173, 275, 325, 328
Paul IV, pope 49, 51, 53, 83, 91, 92, 126, 130, 142
Pazos, Antonio Mauriño de, *see* Mauriño de Pazos
Perejón 29, 115
Perrenot de Granvelle, Antoine (bishop of Arras and later cardinal Granvelle) 37, 39, 50, 73, 75, 76, 84, 89, 92, 98, 102, 126, 128, 129, 136, 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 215, 217, 260, 261, 262, 263, 269, 273, 279, 282, 286, 288, 306, 311, 382
Penna, Doña Tadea de la (Philip II's half-sister) 172
Pelayo, king of Spain 366
Peralta, Don Eugenio de 198–9
Pereira, Francisco xvi, 161, 175–6, 187, 189, 384
Pérez, Antonio 68, 69, 82, 97, 102, 185, 228, 229, 230, 231, 238, 239, 246, 248, 250, 251, 253, 254, 256, 258, 260, 261, 264, 265, 273, 274, 275, 288, 290, 291, 292; 324–29, 333, 337, 354, 360, 383,
Pérez, Gonzalo 70, 74, 138, 139, 140, 145, 149, 229, 288
Perpetual Edict 228, 241–3, 366
Perpignan 16
Persia 306
Peru 4, 62, 112, 154, 200, 295, 363, 381
Philip I, king of Spain 6
Philip II, king of Spain:
PERSONAL: childhood and education, 8, 10–11, 15, 18, 24–5, plates 2, 4; appearance and demeanour, 12, 34, 225, 299, 339, 341; daily routine 65, 113–17, 165, 369; health 10, 55, 271, 282–4, 341–3, 353–6, plate 44; handwriting, 28, plate 5; sexual life, 21–3, 30, 117–18, 162, 164, 394 n. 53, 398 n. 44; dress, 22, 295; death and resurrection, 355–6, 361–2, plate 45; distrust of others 13, 32, 64, 66, 68, 103, 224, 290–1, 351; coldness, 197; curiosity, 110; diligence, 61, 113; fairness 20, 49, 198, 258–9, 345, 352–3; fear of failure 95, 295–6, 354, 367–9; inability to understand finance, 67, 220–2, plate 36; informality and protocol 12, 100, 271, 286; intransigence, 103, 132, 135, 369; love of solitude, 57, 81; self-pity, 121, 167
RELATIONS WITH FAMILY: with parents, xv, 8–25, 26–34, 35–40, 41–4, 49–51, 54, 57–8, 104, 106, 125, 127–8, 130, 159, 174–5, 299, 370, 387 n. 2, plate 3; with siblings, 40, 106, 147–52, 156, 159, 172–4; with wives 19–22, 43–58, 135–6; 160–6; with mothers-in-law 161, 163, 177–8; with children 10, 166–70, 183, 350–3, plate 32
INTERESTS: architecture 16, 18, 102, plates 20, 21, 27; books 110, figure 3; collecting 84, 109, plate 14; cultural patronage 96, 98, 111, 115, 160, 165, 276, 350, 385; gardens and nature 100, 102, 108–9; geography and cartography, 18, 111; hunting and fishing, 101, 108, 146; mathematics, 16, 112; music and dancing 11, 18, 37, 40,169; painting, 18, 108, 160, plate 4; science, magic, and the occult, 110, plate 24
RELIGION 11, 15, 20, 48–9, 56–7, 80–99, 111, 124, 129–34, 142–3, 144–6, 199–200, 201–12, 214–15, 220, 224–5, 259, 285–6, 305–6, 332, 335, 348, 355–6, 366–9, plates 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 26
STYLE OF GOVERNMENT 61–79, 282–301, 343, 370–5, plates 10, 11, 23, 28, 34, 41
AS SEEN BY OTHERS: 27, 30, 48, 64, 80, 96, 150, 151, 282, 321, 342, 346, 358, 84, plates 7, 37
Philip III, prince of Asturias and later King Philip III of Spain (son of Philip II and Anne) 167, 169, 170, 171, 358, 359, 363, plate 32
Philippines 62, 98, 311, 357, 373, 399 n. 33
Picardy 56
Pisuerga, river 28
Pius IV, pope 86, 87, 88, 89, 142
Pius V, pope 88, 90, 91, 134, 164, 203, 206, 383
Pizarro Llorente, Henar 329
Plantin Press (Antwerp) 81, 111, plates 15, 16
Plautus 16
Poitiers 299
Pole, Reginald, cardinal 47, 54, 57
Portsmouth 48
Portugal 3, 9, 13, 14, 19, 66, 90, 92, 98, 99, 100, 115, 137, 159, 167, 169, 170, 173, 177, 181, 188, 189, 262, 264–76, 277, 280, 282, 285, 293, 294, 297, 311, 330, 336, 337, 343, 345, 360, 364, 373, 374, 381, 382, 383
Poza, Don Francisco de Rojas, marquis of 346–7
Prescott, William Hickling xv

Proclamation on Etiquette 286
Providential vision, *see* Messianic Imperialism
Pyrenees 335, 340

Quadra, Bishop Alvaro de la 40, 288
Quijada, Luis 127, 135, 136
Quiroga, Gaspar de 66, 69, 86, 223, 235, 238, 239, 244, 245, 254, 255, 260, 291, 296, 325, 329
Qu'ran 16

Raleigh, Sir Walter 369, 372
Red Sea 96, 195, 203, 204
Regensburg 33, 135
Relaciones topográficas 112
relics, religious 9, 84, 109, 162, 356, 380, 392 n. 15, plate 14
Renard, Simon 43
Requesens, Doña Estefania de 19, 31
Requesens, Don Luis de, Comendador Mayor of Castile 11, 35, 213–18, 224–6, 230–1, 237–8, 240, 288, 289, 300, 380, 382, 383, plates 6, 35
Reuchlin, Johannes 29
Ribadeneira, Pedro de 324, 329, 365
Ribagorza, county of 333, 338, 339
Ridolfi, Roberto 206, 207, 242
Rio Grande 200
Rhine river 210
Roberti, Emilio 186, 187
Robledo 374
Rodríguez Ramos, Dr Prudencio 179
Rodríguez Salgado, María José, xiv, 386 n. 1
Rogier, Philippe 97
Rome 6, 34, 37, 51, 53, 73, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 97, 103, 111, 118, 123, 124, 126, 134, 172, 203, 206, 230, 232, 234, 242, 243, 269, 277, 297, 298, 299, 305, 307, 357, 359, 376, 377, 378, 381, 383, 384, 392, 393, 394, 396, 398, 400
Rotterdam 37
Royal Navy 47, 55
Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor (Philip II's nephew) 158, 384
Rueda, Lope de 160
Rufo, Juan 96
Ruiz, Magdalena 115
Ruiz, Teofilo 100, 334
Ruiz de Velasco, Juan 81

Saint-Réal, César de 175
Salamanca 358
Salamanca, university of 10, 16, 71, 110, 129
Salazar, Tomás de 274
Salic Law 279
San Ambrosio, Fray Hernando de 130, 131
San Augustín, Fray Julián de, *see* Alcalá, Fray Julián de
San Jerónimo, convent of 75, 358
San Lorenzo de El Escorial xv, 53, 75–6, 78, 79, 81, 82, 84, 93, 96, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 115, 116, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 176, 177, 190, 233, 234, 235, 247, 260, 263, 264, 276, 279, 284, 285, 286, 287, 294, 295, 300, 320, 323, 327, 330, 332, 341, 350, 353, 355, 356, 358, 371, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 278, 379, 384
Sánchez, Joan 293
Sánchez Coello, Alonso, 165, plates 31, 40, 43
Sandoval y Rojas, Don Francisco de, *see* Lerma, Don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas
Sanlúcar de Barrameda 316, 382
Santa Cruz, Don Álvaro de Bazán, marquis of 266, 269, 270, 273, 275, 276, 277, 306–17, 320, 344, 359, 371, 372, 376
Santo Domingo 276, 306
São Miguel, Azores 273, plate 38
Sardinia 4, 6, 50, 140, 364, 381
Savoy, duchy of 14, 33, 50, 52, 56, 121, 125, 128, 167, 168, 232, 238, 267, 279, 290, 295, 297, 350, 381, 384
Savoy, Charles Emmanuel duke of (Philip II's son-in-law) 167, 279, 382
Savoy, Catalina Michaela duchess of, *see* Catalina Michaela
Savoy, Emmanuel Philibert duke of (Philip II's cousin) 50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 121, 128, 238, 372, 382
Saxony 4, 10, 81
Schiller, Friedrich 175, 398 n. 2
Scilly Isles 318
Scotland 43, 123, 126, 174, 208, 314, 321, 322, 370, 412 n. 4
Sea Beggars 208–10
Sebastian, king of Portugal 98, 167, 173, 191, 258, 264–6, 373, 376
Segovia 18, 101, 103, 109, 114, 146, 147, 148, 162, 169, 190, 198, 199, 326, 333, 351
Seneca 16
Sepúlveda, Juan Ginés de 16, 384
Serlio, Sebastian 102
Sessa, Don Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, 3rd duke of 34, 380
Sessa, Don Antonio Fernández de Córdoba, 5th duke of 365, 380
Setubal 310
Seville 3, 9, 71, 110, 126, 129, 149, 154, 186, 221, 253, 307, 333, 358–9, 362, 381
Sicily xv, 4, 6, 8, 28, 32, 34, 50, 90, 91, 92, 137, 138, 140, 245, 266, 289, 311, 332, 333, 341, 364, 381
Sigüenza, Fray José de 79, 82, 84, 323, 353, 356, 357, 374, 385
Silíceo, Juan Martínez de Guijo 10, 11, 15, 22, 24
Silva, Don Juan de 116, 188, 265, 301, 345, 375
Simancas, archives and archivists of, 31, 198, 199, 298, 425, figure 14
Simancas, Diego de 31, 69, 78, 174, 187, 298, 376, 377, 378, 381, 383
Sixtus V, pope 89, 174, 305
Smythe, Sir John 78
Solomon, king of Israel 37, 93
Song of El Cid 10, 386 n. 10
Soranzo, Giovanni 100, 117, 161, 184
Southampton 45, 310
Spain, *see* Aragon; Catalonia; Castile; Granada; Navarre *and* Valencia
Spanish Road 151, 231, 299, 311

Spes, Don Guerau de 205, 206
St Anne 273, 276
St Augustine xviii
St Bartholomew, massacre of 97, 99, 107, 211, 373
St Lawrence 53, 82, 103, 104, 106, 107, 149, 207, 279, 353, 392 n. 15
St Quentin, battle of 52, 53, 84, 93, 98, 101, 149, 208, 297, 300, 365, plates 9, 17
Star Wars 398 n. 2
Strozzi, Filippo 209, 273
Stukeley, Thomas 230, 241, 242, 243
Suleiman the Magnificent, Ottoman sultan 6, 8, 137, 138, 139
Suprema (Supreme council of the Inquisition), the 130, 131, 133, 134, 223, 274, 296, 338, 339; *see also* Inquisition
Sweden 144, 148
Swiss Cantons 148, 297

Tagus river 136, 169, 270, 292, 317, 331
Tarazona 337, 339, 340
Tavera, Cardinal Juan Pardo de 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 22, 25, 30, 273
Tenth Penny tax 197, 209, 210, 214, 215, 337
Terceira island 98, 275, 276, 278
Terence 16
Terrones, Dr Aguilar de 363, 374
Thames river 47, 277, 312
Theuerdank, autobiography of Emperor Maximilian I 186, 187, 399 n. 26
Thompson, I. A. A. 346
'Three Graces' (taxes on the church in Castile) 203, 272
Tisnacq, Charles de 146, 147, 152
Titian 96, 165, plate 31
Toledo 12, 18, 23, 69, 103, 104, 105, 115, 130, 134, 135, 136, 138, 162, 182, 200, 216, 217, 258, 259, 262, 263, 273, 290, 292, 325, 333, 338, 348, 374, 378, 383
Toledo, House of 69, 258, 259
Toledo, Juan Bautista de 102–5
Toledo, Doña María de 258
Tomar 271, 281, plate 37
Tordesillas 181, 351
Toro 40, 388
Toul 41
tournaments, *see* jousts
Tracy, James 386 n. 8
Trastámara, Prince Juan of 10, 12, 21
Trent, council of 34, 35, 40, 41, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 90, 133, 200, 297
Tridentine Reforms 87, 88
Tripoli 40, 137, 138
Tunis 4, 138, 173, 203, 216, 221, 223, 234, 273
Tunisia 366
Turégano 326
Turks 3, 8, 49, 51, 78, 82, 137, 138, 139, 144, 146, 173, 216, 264, 266, 272, 290, 299, 306, 315, 366; *see also* Ottoman empire
Tuscany, grand dukes of 253, 275, 357, 385

Ugolini, Giovanni 299
Ulloa, Doña Magdalena de 135, 235
universities, *see* Complutense University; Oxford University; Salamanca; Valladolid and Wittenberg
Utrecht 37, 377, 378

Valdemorillo 374
Valdés, Don Fernando de 19, 130–4
Valdés, Francisco de 400 n. 14
Valencia 6, 8, 16, 31, 108, 201, 378, 380
Valladolid 3, 18, 22, 28, 31, 41, 86, 126, 129, 132, 133, 135, 136, 199, 215, 216, 217, 235, 292, 294, 360
Vallés, Dr. 159
Valsaín, *see* Bosque de Segovia
Vargas, Diego de 396 n. 32
Vargas-Hidalgo, Rafael 383
Vargas Mexía, Juan de 255
Vargas Mexía, Francisco de, tutor of Philip II 16
Vargas Mexía, Francisco de, ambassador 89, 91, 255
Vargas Zapata, Juan de 396 n. 32
Vaucelles, truce of 50
Vázquez, Mateo: and Philip 68, 98, 114, 116, 227, 235, 271, 273, 276, 283–5, 286–7, 288, 289, 292, 300, 309, 319, 322, 331–2, 342, 343, 360, 365, 380–1, 406 n. 15; coordinator of junta system 7–3, 75, 78, 82, 85; and Escobedo murder 247, 256–8, 259–63, 271, 273, 279
Vázquez de Arce, Rodrigo 274, 326–9, 336
Vázquez de Molina, Juan 288
Vázquez de Salazar, Juan 75, 288, 345
Vega, Hernando de 278, 385
Velada, Don Gómez Dávila, marquis of 341, 343, 353, 361, 380
Velasco, Isabel de 411 n. 55,
Velasco, Don Luis de 154
Velasco, Dr Martín de xvi, 40, 287
Venice, Venetian Republic, 70, 78, 79, 117, 203, 204, 206, 212, 213, 216, 229, 261, 297, 299, 383, 384
Verdi, Giuseppe 175
Verdun 41
Vervins, peace of 349
Vienna 178, 297, 382, 384
Villacastín, Fray Antonio de 104, 105, 106, 107, 385
Villahermosa, Don Fernando de Aragón y Borja, duke of 333, 334, 336, 338
Viñas, Antonio de las, *see* Wyngaerde
Virgil 4, 16
Vitruvius 102
Vives, Juan Luis 16
Voth, H.-J., *see* Drelichman

Walcheren 209, 210
Wales 309
Walsingham, Francis 280
Waterford 309
Watson, Robert xvi
Wenceslas (Philip II's nephew) 85, 158, 165, 167, 258, plate 30
West Indies 280
Wilkinson Zerner, Catherine 105, 108

William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy and king of England 308
Wilson, Thomas 367
Wittenberg, university of 4
Wyngaerde, Anton van den 111, 160, plate 27

Yepes, Fray Diego de 344, 348, 355, 383
Yuste 45, 50, 51, 54, 57, 104, 130, 299

Zapata de Chaves, Luis 28–9
Zaragoza 40, 172, 286, 292, 294, 333, 334, 336, 337, 339, 383, 384
Zavala, Domingo de 226
Zayas, Gabriel de 46, 70, 113, 158, 229, 288, 315
Zúñiga, Don Baltasar de 365
Zúñiga, Don Diego de 110
Zúñiga, Don Francés de 8, 386 n. 4
Zúñiga y Avellaneda, Don Juan de 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 285, 288, 351, 370, 380, 382
Zúñiga y Requesens, Don Juan de 118, 190, 285, 288, 306, 309, 311, 351, 380, 382, 394 n. 55, 412 n. 14
Zealand 129, 209, 211, 217, 225, 227, 242, 244
Zutphen 210, 211, 212

LA BIOGRAFÍA
ESENCIAL DE FELIPE II

EL REY IMPRUDENTE

GEOFFREY PARKER

Nueva edición sintetizada y con información inédita de la biografía definitiva de Felipe II.

Felipe II fue el creador del Estado más avanzado de su tiempo, que culminó la formación del primer imperio global jamás conocido. Llegó a gobernar sobre la cuarta parte de la población mundial.

En esta nueva edición actualizada y revisada de la biografía, que ya es, sin dudas, la mejor y más completa jamás escrita sobre el Rey Imprudente, Geoffrey Parker ha sabido aprovechar una vez más, con su habitual agudeza, el inmenso caudal de documentación que ha estado reuniendo desde hace sesenta años. Parker, tan interesado por la alta política como por la vida íntima, logra derribar definitivamente la imagen estereotipada que durante cuatro siglos han transmitido los detractores y apologistas del rey. Gracias a la consulta de los millares de cartas que el monarca escribió de su propia mano a lo largo de su vida, el autor nos introduce en los numerosos sucesos de los que Felipe II fue protagonista durante su largo reinado.

Geoffrey Parker

El rey imprudente

La biografía esencial de Felipe II

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A mi erudito amigo y colega,
Manuel Bustos Rodríguez

Prefacio

María José Rodríguez-Salgado, amiga y colega desde hace treinta y cinco años, escribió: «Confieso que he pasado más tiempo con Felipe II que con ningún otro hombre, y puede decirse que le he dedicado los mejores años de mi vida».[1] Yo podría decir lo mismo. Empecé a investigar documentos para una biografía del rey en la década de 1960, tomando como fuente principal los memoriales ológrafos que intercambió con sus principales consejeros; estos documentos, que pertenecieron a la Colección Altamira, se encuentran ahora repartidos entre distintos archivos en Nueva York, Madrid, Ginebra y Londres. En 1984 Alianza Editorial publicó mi ensayo *Felipe II*, pero mi visión del rey ha cambiado bastante desde entonces. Para empezar, hay muchas fuentes nuevas o que se han podido consultar por primera vez, sobre todo miles de memoriales ológrafos pertenecientes al antiguo archivo de los condes de Altamira y hoy en la Biblioteca de Zabálburu, en Madrid, que no estuvieron a disposición de los investigadores hasta 1987 debido a una disputa testamentaria. Además, como Xavier Gil señaló sagazmente, cuando escribí *Felipe II* la Leyenda Negra aún seguía viva, especialmente en Holanda e Inglaterra, y quizá por eso fui más indulgente hacia la figura del rey, pero aunque otros la apreciaron más, yo me había vuelto «más exigente para con Felipe II».[2] En 2010 publiqué, en Editorial Planeta, *Felipe II. La biografía definitiva*.

Sin duda, llamarla «definitiva» era tentar a la suerte: tan pronto como apareció el libro, encontré una valiosa fuente de información sobre el rey Felipe en los fondos de la Hispanic Society of America, en Nueva York: en torno a tres mil documentos, salidos del despacho del rey y sus secretarios privados Mateo Vázquez y Jerónimo Gassol, que una vez fueron parte de la Colección Altamira.

La incorporación de los nuevos documentos procedentes de la Hispanic Society marca una importante diferencia entre este volumen y *La biografía definitiva*. Otra es su extensión. El anterior trabajo aporta toda la documentación sobre los episodios más polémicos de la vida del rey, y los lectores interesados (o que no quedaron convencidos) encontrarán las pruebas allí. En este caso, he omitido los apéndices, incluido solo las notas que identifican las citas y condensado el texto a la mitad.

Los documentos de la Colección Altamira son únicos. Felipe II tramitaba por escrito todos los asuntos que podía, y sus mensajes para los ministros de mayor rango —a menudo escritos en los márgenes de los informes que le llegaban— abordaban informaciones, peticiones y problemas que arribaban a su mesa desde todas las partes del mundo. Él resolvía algunos asuntos en un solo documento; otros, en una serie de intercambios que se prolongaban varios días o que podían cerrarse en la misma jornada. A menudo, Felipe II caía en una verborrea que no solo revelaba los procesos mentales que subyacían a sus decisiones, sino que también mostraba detalles de su vida personal: cuándo y dónde comía y dormía; qué acababa de leer; qué árboles y flores quería que se plantasen en sus jardines (y dónde); cómo las afecciones que padecía en los ojos, las piernas o la muñeca, o un resfriado o un dolor de cabeza, habían retrasado su correspondencia. Muchos mensajes se ocuparon también de lo que sus ministros llamaban despectivamente «menudencias», es decir, decisiones que ellos consideraban innecesarias. Por ejemplo, un muchacho morisco afirmaba que podía detectar dónde había agua en el palacio de El Pardo, dónde necesitaban riego los jardines. Respuesta del rey: «Sí, pero solo tendrá una oportunidad». ¿Dónde han de colocar los constructores «las necesarias» en El Escorial? «Hagan estas necesarias de manera que no den olor a la pieza de los

mozos de la cocina».[3]

La afición del rey a estos asuntos triviales irritaba y, en algunas ocasiones, enfurecía a sus ministros, en parte porque el mismo documento en que se trataba de los zahoríes o de la situación de los retretes podía incluir una decisión vital para el destino de la monarquía: cómo convencer a don Juan de Austria para que se marchase a los Países Bajos y aceptara ser gobernador general; si firmar o no una tregua con el sultán otomano; cuándo y cómo invadir Inglaterra (por tomar tres ejemplos de un mismo año, 1576). En la mayoría de sus respuestas, el rey pasaba de los asuntos públicos a los personales sin previo aviso, según las diferentes ideas que le cruzaban por la mente. En consecuencia, sus desbordados ministros se veían obligados a leer cada palabra que escribía. Al igual que los historiadores.

Incluso con este valioso material personal, escribir la biografía del rey no es sencillo. Felipe se jactaría con posterioridad de que «Yo comencé a governar el año de [15]43», pues en tal fecha, cuando tenía dieciséis años, lo nombró regente de Castilla y Aragón su padre, el emperador Carlos V. Entre 1554 y 1556 se convirtió sucesivamente en rey de Nápoles y de Inglaterra, soberano de los Países Bajos y monarca de España, de Sicilia y de las conquistas americanas de su predecesor. En 1565 los súbditos de Felipe II emprendieron la conquista de las Filipinas, así llamadas en su honor, y entre 1580 y 1583 agregó Portugal y todas sus posesiones de ultramar. Gobernó el primer imperio global de la historia hasta que murió en 1598, a la edad de setenta y un años.

La extensión de su monarquía, en combinación con la larga duración de su reinado, produjo un exceso de documentos y de datos. Como observó el distinguido académico Pascual de Gayangos a mediados del siglo XIX, mientras transcribía algunos

de los cientos de miles de documentos escritos y leídos por el rey, «la historia de Felipe II es en cierto modo la historia del mundo». William Hickling Prescott, el historiador para quien Gayangos preparó los manuscritos, comenzó su estudio en tres volúmenes sobre el rey con una afirmación ligeramente más modesta: «La historia de Felipe II es la historia de Europa durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVI». Aunque Gayangos y otros recopilaron más de quince gruesos volúmenes de transcripciones para Prescott, estos solo constituyen una exigua fracción de la documentación conservada: en una ocasión, el rey dijo haber firmado cuatrocientas cartas en una sola mañana, y un embajador bien informado aseguró que algunos días pasaban hasta dos mil documentos por el escritorio real. «Filipizar» (como Prescott bautizó su tarea de biógrafo del rey) es trabajo para toda una vida.[4]

Paradójicamente, el segundo obstáculo interpretativo al que se enfrentan los biógrafos de Felipe II parece contradecir al primero. Aunque un equipo de historiadores diligentes y minuciosos juntaran sus energías y lograsen consultar todos los documentos relevantes que se han conservado, muchas cuestiones continuarían siendo oscuras porque, por más que el rey pusiera por escrito más pensamientos y decisiones que prácticamente ningún hombre de Estado, por lo general instaba a sus ministros a seguir sus instrucciones «con secreto y disimulación» (una expresión habitual en su vocabulario) y, por ello, comunicaba muchas decisiones oralmente («de palabra y no por escrito»). También, en ocasiones, procuraba destruir todas las pruebas escritas con el fin de ocultar lo que había hecho. Por añadidura, como escribió el emperador Carlos V en sus célebres *Instrucciones secretas* para su hijo en 1543, algunas decisiones políticas «están tan oscuras y dudosas que no sé cómo dezyrlas ny qué os devo de aconsejar sobre ellas, porque están llenas de confusiones y contradiçiones, o por los negoçios

o por la conçiençia». Al igual que su padre, Felipe tomó algunas decisiones que parecían tan «llenas de confusiones y contradiçiones» que ni siquiera se veía capaz de explicarlas a sus colaboradores más estrechos.[5] Así, en 1571, el desbordado entusiasmo de Felipe por un plan totalmente descabellado para «matar o prender» a Isabel Tudor desconcertó a sus consejeros. «Estraña cosa es quán de veras Su Magestad está en lo de Ingalaterra», escribió el doctor Martín de Velasco, un pragmático letrado que había servido al rey durante más de veinte años, y se maravillaba de «quán poco le ha resfriado el aviso que la reyna tenga entendido» el plan. Por tanto, concluía Velasco, «va Su Magestad en este negocio con tanto calor que cierto parece bien cosa de Dios», y por eso todos debían dejar su escepticismo de lado y disponerse a «ayudar y promover tan santa determinacyón».[6]

¿Cómo pueden los historiadores modernos comprender asuntos que parecían «impenetrables e inciertos» incluso para sus protagonistas? Un recurso obvio es el testimonio de los observadores contemporáneos de Felipe y su corte, pero aquí nos encontramos con otro obstáculo, memorablemente descrito por el filósofo francés Voltaire a mediados del siglo XVIII al tratar el caso del rey: «No se puede repetir demasiado que es necesario desconfiar del pincel de los contemporáneos, guiado casi siempre por la adulación o por el odio». Y de hecho, como observó Robert Watson (contemporáneo de Voltaire y primer biógrafo escocés del rey): «Jamás hubo personaje pintado por diferentes historiadores con colores más opuestos que Felipe».[7] Hay, sin embargo, una excepción importante: los despachos de los embajadores, de una docena de Estados extranjeros, que residían en la corte de España. Cada uno de ellos dedicó su tiempo, su dinero y su energía a quitar el velo de «secreto y disimulación» tejido expresamente por el rey para ocultar a otros sus decisiones y sus planes. Las fuentes diplomáticas

abarcan desde Ruy Gómez de Silva (el privado portugués de Felipe que compartía con regularidad secretos de Estado con su tío Francisco Pereira, el embajador portugués) al bufón enano francés de la reina Isabel (quien, como olvidó todo el mundo menos el embajador francés, la acompañaba constantemente y prestaba oídos a cualquier cosa que se decía). Los despachos diplomáticos basados en fuentes tan bien informadas proporcionan una perspectiva crucial sobre el proceso de toma de decisiones.

El último obstáculo para comprender a Felipe II es menos fácil de superar: su exaltada condición. Un atrevido fraile bromeó una vez ante el rey: «¡O, qué pocos reyes van al cielo, Señor!»; esta afirmación admiró a quienes la oyeron. Entonces el rey preguntó: «¿Por qué, padre?». A lo que este respondió: «¡Porque hay pocos!».[8] También en el siglo XXI «hay pocos reyes», pero ¿cómo puede alguien de la plebe comprender lo que significa ser rey, en especial uno como Felipe, que pasó en guerra todo su reinado excepto seis meses, y a menudo luchando en varios frentes? El historiador militar Eliot Cohen subrayaba «las dificultades que tienen los escritores para ponerse en el lugar de un dirigente político en tiempo de guerra», ya sea rey o plebeyo, pues esos dirigentes soportan «múltiples responsabilidades y sufren tensiones» que han experimentado muy pocos autores. Cohen argumentaba que esta distinción constituye «el mayor obstáculo para un sólido juicio histórico sobre la calidad de un estadista en tiempo de guerra».[9]

En su celebrada biografía *Felipe de España*, Henry Kamen no mostró tales reservas. En vez de ello, sostuvo que, a diferencia de todos los demás estadistas en tiempos de guerra, Felipe II había logrado evitar de algún modo estas «múltiples responsabilidades»:

> En ningún momento tuvo Felipe un control efectivo de los acontecimientos ni

de sus dominios; ni siquiera de su propio destino. De ahí que no se le pueda responsabilizar más que de una pequeña parte de lo que, a la postre, ocurrió durante su reinado… Era «prisionero en un destino en el que poco podía hacer». Lo que le quedaba era jugar las cartas que tenía en la mano.[10]

Por mi parte, no puedo aceptar un determinismo tan extremo. Ciertamente algunos «acontecimientos», e incluso algunos «dominios», escaparon ocasionalmente al «control efectivo» de Felipe, del mismo modo que escapan periódicamente al «control efectivo» de todo estadista en tiempo de guerra. Sin embargo, Felipe pasó su vida tomando decisiones que le permitieran mantener o recuperar la iniciativa. En 1557 enviaba órdenes, escritas de su puño y letra, «a la una ora de medianoche»; en 1565 «[estoy] tan ocupado y tan alcanzado de sueño porque he menester lo más de las noches para ver papeles que otros negocios no me dexan de día y así comyenço a ver estos vuestros agora, que es pasada medianoche»; en 1575, «son las diez, y estoy hecho en pedazos y muerto de hambre»; y, en 1583, «todo ha sido leer y escribir con ser día de correo y otras muchas cosas que he tenido hoy que hacer, pero todo de esto; y así escribo ésta a más de las diez y harto cansado y no habiendo hecho colación».[11]

Las decisiones tomadas por Felipe durante estos largos días de trabajo podían tener consecuencias trascendentales. En 1566 su negativa a prorrogar los mandatos concedidos por su padre cuarenta años antes a la población morisca de Granada, y en su lugar imponer la conformidad religiosa en ella, provocó una guerra civil que llevó a la muerte a no menos de noventa mil españoles, entre cristianos viejos y moriscos, y al reasentamiento forzoso de unos ochenta mil moriscos más. De modo parecido, la determinación del rey en 1571 de «matar o prender» a Isabel Tudor convirtió a la soberana en una enemiga implacable que, durante el resto de su reinado, ocasionó deliberadamente enormes daños y perjuicios tanto a los súbditos de Felipe como a la reputación de este. Todavía más costosa, la decisión del rey

de reanudar la guerra en los Países Bajos en 1577 inició hostilidades que durarían treinta años y causarían la muerte de decenas de miles de hombres, mujeres y niños, aparte de costar cientos de millones de ducados. En estos y otros innumerables casos, seguramente «tuvo Felipe un control efectivo de los acontecimientos» así como «de su propio destino»: pudo haber tomado otras decisiones (prorrogar los mandatos, dejar tranquila a Isabel Tudor, conservar la paz recién firmada en los Países Bajos), pero no lo hizo.

En 1599 Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas completó el borrador de la historia de los últimos tiempos encargada por Felipe II. En él señalaba que «todos los reyes del mundo, y en especial los de Castilla y de Aragón», habían utilizado un «sobrenombre» como «el Católico» o «el Sabio», por lo que facilitó al Consejo Real una lista de aquellos que él consideraba apropiados para el difunto rey: «el Bueno, el Prudente, el Honesto, el Justo, el Devoto, el Modesto, el Constante». También presentó una imagen heroica que ilustraba uno de estos epítetos [véase lámina 1]. El consejo los aprobó, y Herrera publicó su obra *Historia general del mundo del tiempo del señor rey don Felipe II, el Prudente*, dándole al rey el sobrenombre que desde entonces se ha hecho universal.[12]

Aunque en este libro sostengo que Herrera se equivocó al elegir el epíteto regio, estoy de acuerdo con san Agustín en que «*nemo nisi per amicitiam cognoscitur*» (no se puede conocer a nadie sino por la amistad). Esto no significa que los biógrafos deban fiarse de sus protagonistas sin reserva; por el contrario, tenemos que estar preparados ante la posibilidad de que (vivos o muertos) nos lleven a errores, ya sea queriendo (por medio de la falsificación y de la destrucción de documentos comprometedores) o sin querer (a causa de nuestras propias limitaciones para comprender cómo eran las cosas entonces y olvidar futuros acontecimientos de los que ellos no pudieron

saber). Con todo, el precepto de san Agustín exige a los biógrafos ofrecer a sus protagonistas la misma actitud abierta y buena disposición para escuchar que tendrían ante un amigo. Con tal espíritu, amable lector, voy a recurrir a las propias palabras del rey, tanto como sea posible, para revelar la vida del más famoso soberano de España, comenzando con su concepción en la Alhambra de Granada en septiembre de 1526 y terminando en septiembre de 1603, cinco años después de su muerte, cuando cerca del pueblo de Paracuellos de Jarama cinco testigos maravillados vieron ascender el alma del Rey Prudente desde el purgatorio al paraíso.

PRIMERA PARTE
El umbral del poder

1. Aprendizaje cortesano, 1527-1543

Felipito

El 10 de marzo de 1526, Carlos V, sacro emperador romano y soberano de Castilla, Aragón, Nueva España, Perú, los Países Bajos y gran parte de Italia, entró en la bulliciosa ciudad de Sevilla por primera vez. Ataviado todavía con sus ropas de viaje y cubierto de polvo, desmontó de su caballo en el patio del Real Alcázar y entró a grandes zancadas en la habitación donde la princesa Isabel de Portugal, su prima, le estaba esperando. El papa ya había enviado una dispensa por la cual los primos quedaban exentos de la prohibición eclesiástica de contraer matrimonio (y de hacerlo en Cuaresma), y sus representantes también habían firmado ya el contrato matrimonial; de modo que, tras quince minutos de educada conversación con la novia, a la que nunca hasta entonces había visto, Carlos se vistió con sus mejores galas y asistió a la misa nupcial y al posterior baile. Luego, a las dos de la madrugada, la pareja se fue a la cama a consumar su unión.

Las primeras semanas de casados de la pareja imperial fueron idílicas. Se quedaban «en la cama hasta las diez y once de la mañana» todos los días, y cuando salían de la habitación mostraban «una indudable satisfacción».[13] El matrimonio y su séquito se dirigieron después lentamente a Granada, a rendir sus respetos ante sus abuelos comunes, los Reyes Católicos, enterrados en la Capilla Real de la catedral, con la intención de continuar su majestuoso avance hasta Barcelona, desde donde Carlos tenía previsto partir para emprender una cruzada contra los turcos otomanos, dejándole a su esposa el gobierno de España; pero entonces llegaron noticias de que el rey de Francia había declarado la guerra. Esto impidió la salida de España del emperador, por lo que su esposa y él pasaron los seis meses

siguientes en Granada, esperando a que la situación internacional mejorase, y en la Alhambra fue concebido Felipe II. La emperatriz se quedó en Granada, descansando, hasta principios de 1527, cuando realizó un pausado viaje para reunirse con su esposo en Valladolid, entonces capital administrativa de Castilla.[14]

Como a menudo ocurre con el primer hijo, el parto fue difícil y duró casi trece horas. La emperatriz siguió el ejemplo de su abuela, Isabel la Católica, y pidió que le cubrieran la cara con un velo para que nadie pudiera ver su sufrimiento, y cuando una comadrona la instó a que diera rienda suelta a sus sentimientos, la emperatriz respondió adustamente: «No me digáis tal, que moriré, pero no gritaré». «Felipito», como le llamaba el bufón del emperador, llegó al mundo alrededor de las cuatro de la tarde del 21 de mayo de 1527 y, en la ceremonia del bautizo, celebrada dos semanas después, los heraldos reales gritaron tres veces en voz muy alta: «¡Don Felipe, por la gracia de Dyos, príncipe de Spaña!». Pero Felipito heredaría mucho más que el trono de España.[15]

La herencia

La casualidad dinástica había reunido en la persona de Carlos V cuatro herencias distintas. Del padre de su padre, el emperador Maximiliano de Austria, Carlos había recibido las ancestrales tierras de los Habsburgo en Europa central; de la madre de su padre, María de Borgoña, había heredado numerosos ducados, condados y señoríos en los Países Bajos y el Franco Condado de Borgoña. De la madre de su madre, Isabel la Católica, Carlos recibió Castilla y los enclaves castellanos en el norte de África, el Caribe y América Central; del padre de su madre, Fernando el Católico, heredó Aragón, Nápoles, Sicilia y Cerdeña. Carlos pronto añadió más territorios a este impresionante núcleo de bienes patrimoniales: varias provincias de los Países Bajos

mediante tratados, el ducado de Milán cuando la dinastía autóctona de este se extinguió, y Túnez, en el norte de África, mediante conquista. Y lo más espectacular de todo, en América, sus súbditos españoles destruyeron primero el Imperio azteca, ocupando un área de ocho veces el tamaño de Castilla, y luego el Imperio inca en Perú. En 1535, cuando entró en la ciudad de Mesina, en Sicilia, Carlos V vio por primera vez la feliz frase acuñada por el poeta romano Virgilio en referencia a las posesiones del emperador Augusto: A SOLIS ORTU AD OCCASUM, «desde la salida del sol hasta el ocaso», o, como los «portavoces» de su hijo dirían luego, «un imperio en el que no se ponía el sol».[⇒]

Ningún soberano europeo había controlado un imperio tan extenso, y la ausencia de precedentes contribuye a explicar la naturaleza aparentemente azarosa de la toma de decisiones por parte de los Austrias españoles: no tenían más opción que improvisar y experimentar, probar diferentes técnicas de gobierno sobre la marcha, aprender por ensayo y (a veces) error. En todo caso, la experiencia anterior no habría servido de ayuda dado que, durante la mayor parte de su reinado, Carlos V se enfrentó a una combinación de enemigos sin precedentes: dos de ellos religiosos, los protestantes y el papado, y otros dos políticos, Francia y el Imperio otomano.

Entre los cuatro empezó a fraguarse una peligrosa sinergia a raíz de que, en enero de 1519, su abuelo Maximiliano muriera dejando dos importantes asuntos pendientes. El viejo emperador no había conseguido silenciar a Martín Lutero, profesor de teología en la Universidad de Wittenberg (Sajonia), que escribía panfletos y discursos para recabar el apoyo público para sus tesis sobre la corrupción del papado y la necesidad de una reforma eclesiástica. Maximiliano tampoco había conseguido obtener el reconocimiento de que Carlos le sucedería como sacro emperador romano. Entonces, durante la

primavera y el verano de 1519, Carlos y el rey Francisco I de Francia abonaron enormes sumas de dinero a los siete electores (*Kurfürsten*) que elegirían al próximo rey de los romanos (el emperador electo, pendiente de la coronación papal). Al final, Carlos resultó vencedor, de modo que sus territorios rodearon a Francia por el norte, este y sur. En 1521 Francisco declaró la guerra y, durante más de un siglo, tanto él como sus sucesores se esforzaron por poner fin al cerco de los Austrias rompiendo los lazos que unían a los diversos territorios heredados o adquiridos por Carlos V.

Los papas también se sintieron amenazados por la elección imperial, dado que Carlos ahora gobernaba no solo Cerdeña y España, al oeste, y Nápoles y Sicilia, al sur, sino también el Imperio al norte. Además, Roma dependía de las exportaciones de cereales procedentes de Sicilia, al tiempo que toda su actividad comercial, tanto marítima como terrestre, quedaba a la merced de los enclaves circundantes en manos de los Austrias. Por eso, las «cruzadas» de Carlos V (y posteriormente de Felipe II) tanto contra los infieles como contra los protestantes solían carecer de apoyo papal por miedo a que cualquier otro éxito sirviera para estrechar más el cerco sobre Roma. El sultán otomano, Solimán el Magnífico, también veía a Carlos como su enemigo natural. Durante su largo reinado (1520-1566), Solimán condujo a sus tropas hasta el Danubio en cinco ocasiones, en cada una de las cuales conquistó tierras de los Austrias o bien de sus aliados, y solo su necesidad de hacer frente a otros enemigos extranjeros y a los conflictos internos evitó que protagonizara más avances.

Carlos, por su parte, también se hallaba distraído periódicamente por sus enemigos internos. La muerte de su abuelo Fernando de Aragón, el Católico, en 1516 dio lugar a una complicada herencia. A pesar de que el matrimonio de Fernando con Isabel de Castilla había creado una unión

dinástica, las instituciones, leyes, moneda y estructura jurídica de cada reino mantenían sus identidades propias —Castilla, Aragón, Cataluña, Valencia y Navarra (anexionada por Fernando en 1512)—, y los poderes y políticas de la corona diferían en cada área. Aunque Fernando había sido rey consorte de Castilla mientras vivió Isabel, cuando esta murió en 1504 su título se extinguió y la corona pasó a la hija mayor del matrimonio, Juana, y su marido, Felipe de Austria, soberano de los Países Bajos, los padres de Carlos.

Juana, a diferencia de su madre, no mostraba deseos ni aptitudes de gobierno, por lo que Fernando y Felipe lucharon por el control de Castilla. Felipe venció, pero murió casi inmediatamente después. Fernando destituyó entonces a los oficiales nombrados por su yerno, la mayoría de los cuales (más tarde conocidos como «felipistas») huyeron a la corte del joven Carlos en Flandes, donde pasaron la década siguiente planeando su venganza. Fernando también recluyó a su hija Juana, a pesar de que era «reina propietaria» de Castilla, y actuó como «gobernador» del reino. En su testamento, nombró a Carlos único heredero de sus dominios y, en 1517, el nuevo rey y los «felipistas» llegaron procedentes de los Países Bajos para tomar posesión. Dos años más tarde, la elección de Carlos como sacro emperador romano lo obligó a regresar al norte de Europa y, en su ausencia, se produjeron revueltas contra su autoridad en Mallorca, Sicilia, Valencia y, sobre todo, en Castilla, donde las Comunidades se afanaban por convertir a Juana en reina, no solo de nombre, sino también *de facto*.

El regreso del emperador en 1522 restauró el orden en España, pero dejó a Alemania al borde del caos, dado que el hermano de Carlos, Fernando, su regente, no podía frenar la propagación de las ideas protestantes ni la expansión del poder otomano. Aunque Fernando contrajo matrimonio con la hermana del rey Luis de Hungría (el cual se casó a su vez con la

hermana de Fernando, María), el apoyo militar y financiero de la Casa de Austria no consiguió evitar que Solimán derrotara a los húngaros en 1526. Tanto el rey Luis como la mayoría de sus nobles sucumbieron en la batalla, y las fuerzas otomanas lograron adentrarse tierra adentro en Hungría. Desesperado, Fernando ofreció tolerancia a los luteranos de Alemania a cambio de su ayuda militar contra los turcos. La influencia protestante se extendió más rápidamente todavía.[⇒]

Verdadero príncipe de Castilla

Carlos se encontraba impotente para enfrentarse a estos contratiempos debido a que la guerra abierta con los turcos, los franceses y el papa le tenía confinado en España, pero esto a su vez le permitió en mayo de 1527 organizar los festejos para celebrar la llegada de Felipe, el primer príncipe nacido en España desde hacía cincuenta años. Según un embajador, «[está] el Emperador tan alegre y regocijado y gozoso del nuevo hijo que en otra cosa no entiende sino en ordenar fiestas». Felipito, por supuesto, no se enteró ni de esto ni de la ceremonia celebrada al año siguiente en el monasterio de San Jerónimo el Real de Madrid en la que fue jurado como príncipe de Castilla. Su atención por entonces permanecía centrada en sus padres y las tres nodrizas que cuidaban de él.

Carlos e Isabel continuaban pareciéndoles a todos, como escribió el embajador Martín de Salinas, «los dos mejores casados que yo sepa deste mundo».[16] Aunque la emperatriz adoraba a su marido, Carlos parecía ver a su esposa principalmente como procreadora y administradora. Gracias a las amas de cría, la emperatriz recuperó rápidamente su fertilidad y, tres meses después del nacimiento del príncipe, Carlos dejó a su esposa, de nuevo embarazada, como regente de Castilla mientras él iba a Aragón para reunirse con las Cortes, con la clara intención de continuar viaje hasta Barcelona y de

allí pasar a Italia; y cuando las hostilidades con Francia volvieron a impedir una vez más su partida, en lugar de regresar para estar con su esposa, prosiguió hasta Valencia. Por lo tanto, Carlos no estuvo presente cuando Isabel dio a luz a la infanta María, en junio de 1528. Regresó dos meses más tarde, pero se marchó nueve meses después. Gracias a una ventajosa paz con sus enemigos, Carlos pudo surcar sin percances el Mediterráneo hasta Italia, dejando a su mujer, una vez más embarazada, a cargo de la regencia. No volvería a ver a su esposa y sus hijos en cuatro años.

Así pues, Felipito pasó su infancia sin padre. Cuando tenía dos años fue destetado y, al año siguiente, él y su hermana, la infanta María, pasaban el tiempo «en imbidias sobre quál tiene más vestidos». Según un cortesano, «el príncipe está muy contento con un sayo y un capote de monte que tiene. Pide cada día» a su madre «que vaya a Aranxuez, y con este vestido y una vallesta que tiene, amenaza tanto a los venados, que me parece que cuando Vuestra Majestad [Carlos V] venga no hallará ya que matar». Como todos los niños, el príncipe tenía sus altibajos. Así, en 1531, «su pasatiempo es ordenar justas a los niños, y las lanzas son velas encendidas»: todo el mundo se rio de esta gracia. También se rieron cuando una dama le suplicó que recibiese a un paje y él se negó, pues «tenía muchos» y no lo podía tomar a su cargo, por lo que era mejor que se lo diera «a su hermana que no tenía ninguno», pero le contestaron que ella no podía tener pajes tan pronto. Enojado, Felipito replicó: «Pues busca otro príncipe, que por estas calles los hallarás». Era el primer diálogo registrado del príncipe. Pero, en otras ocasiones, «suele Su Alteza enojarse algunas veces, porque no le quiere dar de comer todo lo que quiere. Es tan travieso, que algunas veces Su Majestad [Isabel] se enoja de veras; y ha avido azotes de su mano».[17]

A la edad de cuatro años, Felipe «conoce las calidades de las

personas que le sirven como si pasase de diez años» y «anduvo en su mulica solo y hallose muy bien». Se niega a viajar con su madre en su carruaje; en su lugar, «deseaba que llevasen allá a la Señora Infanta, que se halla muy bien con su compañía, por donde parece que no será mal galán». El príncipe también rehusaba montar a la amazona en su «machico pequeño»: «No quiso que le sentasen en la silla sino los pies en los estribos».[18] Esa madurez condujo a una transición importante. El día de Santiago de 1531, mientras se encontraba en un convento asistiendo a una ceremonia en la que tres jóvenes aspirantes a monjas tomaban los hábitos, la emperatriz permitió a su hijo que cambiara las largas vestiduras que entonces llevaban los infantes de ambos sexos por el jubón y las calzas que usaban solo los varones. A partir de entonces, aunque continuó siendo acompañado a todas partes por su madre, sus damas y su hermana, el príncipe empezó a asistir a torneos, festivales y otras actividades públicas. De este modo comenzó su paso de la vida privada a la pública.

La decisión de la emperatriz de llevar a cabo en un convento esta significativa transición en la vida de su hijo refleja no solo su propia devoción, sino también la ferviente piedad de las otras dos personas que supervisaban el bienestar del niño en esa etapa de su vida: doña Inés Manrique de Lara y doña Leonor de Mascarenhas. La primera, de una eminente familia castellana (su tío era arzobispo de Sevilla e inquisidor general), había servido a Isabel la Católica como camarera mayor y, tras la muerte de la reina, se había retirado a un convento donde su ejemplar piedad le había hecho ganar fama de beata. Sin duda, fue esto lo que llevó a la emperatriz a llamar a doña Inés a la corte, para prestar servicios como aya del príncipe y, como tal, responsable de su bienestar físico y moral. Doña Leonor era mucho más joven —había nacido el mismo año que la emperatriz, en cuyo servicio había venido a Castilla

—, pero vivía también como una beata y, si bien carecía del título oficial, ejercía asimismo como aya del príncipe.

El fervor religioso de sus dos ayas reflejaba el de la propia emperatriz (y el de su abuela, Isabel la Católica): práctica, ascética y vehemente. Antes de concebir a Felipe, Isabel encargó misas especiales para asegurar su fertilidad e hizo la promesa, en la iglesia de Santa María la Antigua de Sevilla, de regalar una estatuilla de plata de un niño como exvoto por cada hijo que concibiera (según su testamento, mandó fabricar y enviar a la iglesia cinco estatuillas de plata). Dio a luz rodeada de una colección de reliquias que se había traído de Portugal mientras agarraba el cíngulo de santa Isabel, que, según se decía, la madre de Juan el Bautista había tenido en la mano durante su parto; más adelante, envió las mantillas que Felipito había llevado antes y después de su bautismo a ser bendecidas por otra beata, la cordobesa sor Magdalena de la Cruz, famosa por sus visiones y profecías, que a su vez le enviaba de vuelta algunos de sus hábitos «para que» (según un cronista) «el infante fuera envuelto en ellos y así aparentemente defendido y amparado de los ataques del diablo».[19]

Felipe sobrevivió no solo a «los ataques del diablo», sino también a los peligros a los que se enfrentan los pequeños de todas las épocas. Un día, doña Leonor se dio cuenta de que se había colgado por fuera de la reja situada en el exterior de uno de los pisos altos de palacio e inmediatamente hizo voto de castidad permanente si Dios le permitía salvar al príncipe. Acontecimientos traumáticos como estos, unidos a la muerte en 1530 de su segundo hijo varón, Fernando, afectaron a la emperatriz profundamente: en adelante, el pánico se apoderaba de ella cada vez que sus restantes hijos, especialmente Felipe, sufrían la menor enfermedad, y su ánimo decaía cada vez que Carlos estaba fuera de casa. Según un embajador extranjero, «proceden sus males de la pérdida del Señor Infante, que Dios

tiene en gloria, y de alguna indisposición que el príncipe [Felipe] tiene, y el principal de la ausencia» de su marido.[20] Entonces, en la primavera de 1533, recibieron noticias de que Carlos llegaría a Barcelona, e Isabel y sus dos hijos supervivientes partieron para reunirse con él allí. Un cortesano señalaba orgulloso que Felipe era ya lo bastante grande y fuerte para pasar de montar en mula a montar en caballo; pero el desarrollo intelectual del príncipe iba más a la zaga: no sabía todavía leer ni escribir, y su principal contacto con la cultura escrita se limitaba a la lengua oral. Escuchaba historias como las del Cid tan a menudo que llegó incluso a memorizarlas. Así, un día en que uno de sus compañeros le estaba importunando, Felipe replicó: «Mucho me aprietas, Hulano; cras me besarás la mano», reproche inspirado claramente en un fragmento de *La Jura de Santa Gadea* en el que el rey Alfonso le dice al Cid:

> Mucho me aprietas, Rodrigo; Rodrigo, mal me has tratado,
> mas hoy me tomas la jura, cras me besarás la mano.[21]

A su regreso a España, el emperador decidió que su hijo, ya de siete años de edad, necesitaba un «maestro» y, en 1534, nombró a Juan Martínez del Guijo. Conocido por la versión latinizada de su apellido, *Silíceo*, era un sacerdote de 48 años de edad y origen humilde que había estudiado en París y publicado libros de filosofía y de matemáticas antes de convertirse en catedrático de filosofía en Salamanca. Durante el siguiente lustro el príncipe se esforzó con su maestro en estudiar la *Grammatica breve* de Marineo Sículo (al parecer, el primer libro que poseyó) y las obras piadosas de Ludolfo de Sajonia, llamado el Cartujano.

En marzo de 1535 Carlos abandonó una vez más a sus hijos, dejando a su esposa embarazada otra vez. Tres meses más tarde, Isabel dio a luz a la infanta Juana y enseguida Carlos decidió apartar al príncipe del «poder de las mugeres» y crear otra casa para él, dirigida por don Juan de Zúñiga y Avellaneda,

uno de los nobles «felipistas» que llevaba a su servicio casi treinta años. Resulta significativo que Carlos quisiera que su hijo «se criase e sirviese de la manera que se tuuo con el príncipe su tío», Juan de Trastámara, hijo y heredero de Fernando e Isabel, el último príncipe de Asturias.[22] La creación de una casa independiente para Felipe en 1535 significó que, a partir de entonces, solo sería atendido por sirvientes masculinos —el emperador nombró a unos cuarenta— y que Zúñiga, o su ayudante, dormiría en la misma cámara que él por la noche y le mantendría bajo constante vigilancia durante el día. «Solo hago ausencia», le aseguraba Zúñiga a Carlos V, cuando «estaua escriuiendo para Vuestra Majestad» o «estando [don Felipe] en la escuela, o en parte con su madre donde yo no pueda entrar». Felipe iba a convertirse en un «verdadero prínçipe de Castilla».[23] Su mundo nunca volvería a ser el mismo.

Príncipe de España

La exclusión de Zúñiga de «la escuela» reflejaba la tradición castellana según la cual «conviene que el príncipe tenga dos personas que le enseñen cosas diversas: vn maestro que le abeze letras y buenas costumbres, y vn ayo que lo industrie en militares y galanes exercicios».[24] Así pues, Silíceo fue quien enseñó al príncipe (y a seis de sus pajes) a leer, escribir y rezar, aunque el progreso fue bastante lento. En noviembre de 1535, el maestro informaba a Carlos de que «se cumplieron dos meses que estuvo sin leer ni escrevir» porque el príncipe había estado enfermo; tres meses después, Silíceo anunció que de nuevo había suspendido por algunos días los estudios de latín del príncipe «porque son difíciles estos primeros principios»: no es de extrañar, por tanto, que, a la edad de trece años, aunque el príncipe podía supuestamente entender el latín que leía y oía, «el escribir en latín [solo] se ha començado».[25]

En cambio, Felipe mostró una precoz devoción religiosa.

Nada más asumir el cargo de ayo en 1535, el severo y devoto Zúñiga ya señalaba que «el temor de Dios en el [príncipe] es tan natural que en su hedad yo no lo he visto mayor. Creo yo que le ayuda mucho ser tan buenas mugeres y cristianas doña Inés Manrrique y doña Leonor Mascarenhas». Así pues, el príncipe dedicaba las mañanas enteras a rezar y a las lecciones. Los libros de contabilidad de su casa y las cartas de sus tutores a Carlos V revelan cómo pasaba el resto del día. «Aprende muy bien después que está en la escuela», refería Zúñiga a Carlos en 1535, añadiendo maliciosamente «aunque ¡cuando va a ella parece un poco a su padre quando era de su hedad!». El príncipe desarrolló una gran pasión por la caza: las descripciones de las cartas de Zúñiga, así como la frecuente compra de ballestas, flechas y jabalinas por el tesorero de su casa, testimonian su creciente habilidad para matar animales en los parques reales. Solo Silíceo era capaz de extraer una lectura positiva de la preferencia del rey por la caza antes que por el estudio, y, en este sentido, tranquilizaba a su soberano diciendo que «ase de tener a mucho que en esta hedad de catorce años, en la cual naturaleza comiença a sentir flaquezas, aya Dyos dado al príncipe tanta voluntad a la caça».[26]

Al final, Carlos tuvo que fijar una cuota semanal para cada especie en cuanto al número de piezas que a Felipe se le permitía abatir; pero, para compensar su desilusión, el ayuda de cámara del príncipe recibía «30 ducados que cobra él cada mes para las cosas que dan contentamiento a su alteza». Entre ellas se incluía «un hombre de armas de plata, armado de todas las pieças; un cauallo de plata para el dicho hombre de armas»; y «seis pieçeçicas de artillería pequeñitas doradas». Estos artículos iban todos dirigidos a desarrollar el espíritu marcial del príncipe. Otros eran simplemente «para su alteza olgar con él», como «un caxcabel de las Indias que haze un sonido suave» y «un espejo de las Indias hecho a manera de cabeça de perrillo».

Felipe también poseía una baraja de cartas con la que él y don Luis de Requesens, el hijo mayor de Zúñiga y su paje principal, «fent una església de naips vui tot lo dia».[27] Tenía asimismo pájaros como animales de compañía, a algunos de los cuales se les había cegado a propósito porque se creía que así trinaban mejor: cuando por entonces su casa tuvo que trasladarse de un palacio a otro, se precisó una mula extra para transportar el aviario del príncipe. Una xilografía de Antonio de Honcala muestra al joven príncipe jugando con un pájaro sujeto a un cordel [véase lámina 2]. Posteriormente, Felipe adquirió otros animales domésticos: un perro que dormía en su cámara en un «colchón de aneja» especial, una mona, seis cobayas y un papagayo.

Felipe también aprendía a comportarse adecuadamente en público. En los bailes, su pareja era su hermana María y desfilaba en las procesiones que precedían a las corridas de toros y los torneos. En 1535, por primera vez, apareció en público con armadura en «una muy solemne justa» en Madrid (aunque luego se sentaba junto a sus hermanas en un palco especial para contemplar el espectáculo). El joven príncipe permanecía junto a su madre cuando esta recibía embajadores, y se sentaba al lado de su padre cuando este inauguraba las Cortes de Castilla.

El emperador rara vez estaba presente para intervenir en la formación de su hijo. En marzo de 1535 dejó España y no regresó hasta enero de 1537; después, en cuanto la emperatriz quedó encinta otra vez, Carlos se marchó a Aragón. Isabel dio a luz sola, en esta ocasión a otro infante bautizado con el nombre de su fallecido tío Trastámara, Juan. Moriría al poco tiempo. Este suceso hizo que el emperador se apresurara en regresar a Castilla —tal vez preocupado por el hecho de que su esposa se aproximaba al final de su edad fértil y él solo tenía un heredero —, pero cuando Isabel se quedó embarazada de nuevo, Carlos volvió a marcharse, dejándole «molt amarga desta partida del

Emperador per por que no es detinga allà més de lo que diu», según una de sus damas, la cual añadía, «té raó, que molt trista vida pasa en sa absènsia».[28] Este embarazo, el quinto, también se malogró, lo que obligó a Carlos a volver e intentar engendrar un hijo de nuevo: aquella sería la última vez. En abril de 1539, mientras el emperador y Felipe se dirigían a Madrid para salir de caza, la emperatriz dio a luz a otro infante, que nació muerto, a raíz de lo cual ella enfermó y falleció el primero de mayo de 1539, tres semanas antes del duodécimo cumpleaños del príncipe Felipe [véase lámina 3].

Felipe no olvidaría nunca aquellos primeros años con su madre. Cuando en 1570 el mayordomo mayor de su nueva esposa, Ana de Austria, le preguntó qué protocolo se debía seguir en la casa, el rey contestó «que todo se haga como en el [tiempo] de mi madre»; y cuando surgían preguntas concretas, el rey volvía a referirse a «lo que se me acuerda que pasó en tiempo de my madre». Felipe también se acordaba de las personas de aquellos primeros años. Un día de 1594, a la edad de 67 años, al recibir una carta en la que se proponían candidatos para el puesto de inquisidor general, se vio abrumado por los recuerdos de sus primeros años y de las carreras de anteriores titulares. «Quando se dio la Inquisición General al Cardenal Tavera, ya era arzobispo de Toledo desde el año de [15]34, que murió don Alonso de Fonseca, que también conocí, y que vi la noche antes que muriese, que llegamos a Alcalá y murió la noche que estuvimos allí». También recordaba su primer encuentro con el padre de uno de los candidatos, «que fue en el principio del año de 1533 con la emperatriz mi señora, que aya gloria, a Barcelona a esperar allí al emperador mi señor, que también aya gloria».[29]

Padre e hijo

Tras la muerte de Isabel, el emperador se retiró a un monasterio

durante siete semanas para llorar la pérdida de su esposa, y ordenó a sus dos hijas trasladarse a la villa de Arévalo, donde podrían crecer lejos del bullicio de la corte y de su hermano. Felipe tenía que presidir en solitario las exequias fúnebres por su madre, celebradas en la iglesia de San Juan de los Reyes de Toledo. Esta fue su primera aparición solo en la escena pública. Cuando Carlos abandonó su retiro monacal, decidió hacerse cargo personalmente de la preparación de su heredero y, a tal efecto, incrementó notablemente el número de sus criados y ascendió a Zúñiga para que fuera mayordomo mayor (sin dejar de ser el ayo) del príncipe. Pero casi enseguida llegaron noticias de una sublevación en los Países Bajos encabezada por Gante, la ciudad natal de Carlos. Esto planteaba un complejo dilema para el emperador, puesto que también los pecheros de Castilla parecían inquietos. En 1538, los nobles y ciudades reunidos en las Cortes de Castilla expusieron que, dados los «18 años que ha que Vuestra Magestad está en armas por mar y tierra», era menester que «Vuestra Majestad trabaje por tener suspensión de guerras», y se negaron a votar nuevos impuestos para las guerras extranjeras. El emperador, enfurecido, ordenó a todos retirarse con severos reproches.[30] Por tanto, dejar España representaba un riesgo importante: todos recordaban que la última vez que Carlos se había marchado sin nombrar a un regente de sangre real, la rebelión de los comuneros casi le había costado el trono. Ahora, sin la emperatriz, carecía de un pariente adulto que pudiera gobernar España; pero tampoco podía ignorar el riesgo de no marcharse. Según su hermana María, su regente en los Países Bajos, «aquí lo que está en juego es si Su Majestad será señor o siervo».[31]

Así pues, Carlos decidió partir para los Países Bajos en noviembre de 1539, y dejó a Felipe como su regente nominal, pero con el poder ejecutivo investido en el cardenal Juan de Tavera, primado de España e inquisidor general, que actuaría

como «gobernador» asistido por Francisco de Los Cobos, el responsable *de facto* del aparato administrativo y financiero de Castilla, a quien Carlos había designado para el puesto de secretario de Felipe. Justo antes de abandonar España, Carlos preparó dos juegos de Instrucciones. Las que iban dirigidas a sus ministros se concentraban en sus tareas y responsabilidades administrativas, mientras que el documento para Felipe trataba de política. El emperador lo redactó «por forma de admonición, parecer y consejo», de modo que, en caso de que «Dios será servido de llevarnos para sí» antes de haber conseguido sus objetivos políticos, «el dicho príncipe sepa nuestra intención» y pudiera seguir las estrategias religiosas, dinásticas y políticas correctas «para que poder vivir y reinar pacíficamente y en prosperidad». Este fue el primero de los muchos documentos de asesoramiento que conformarían decisivamente la perspectiva política del príncipe, que perseguiría las metas marcadas por su padre durante el resto de su vida.[32]

Tras exigir al príncipe que amara a Dios y defendiese su Iglesia, el emperador le instaba a depositar su confianza, por encima de todo, en sus parientes. «Que tenga y conserve buena, verdadera, sincera y perfecta amistad y inteligencia con el Rey de Romanos, nuestro hermano [Fernando], y con nuestros sobrinos y sobrinas sus hijas; con las reynas de Francia [su hermana Leonora] y viuda de Hungría [su hermana María]; con el rey y reina de Portugal [su hermana Catalina], y sus hijos y hermanos del dicho señor rey, como por deber de parentesco el dicho nuestro hijo es obligado, y siguiendo la dicha amistad y inteligencia como ha sido y es entre nos». Carlos exponía a continuación la mejor manera de tratar tres asuntos contenciosos: Francia, los Países Bajos y Milán. Él los consideraba relacionados, dado que, aunque en aquel momento estaba en paz con el rey de Francia, dicha paz solo se

mantendría si las partes se ponían de acuerdo «en el quitar y extinguir todas las querellas y pretensiones de intereses» relativas a los Países Bajos y Milán, y sellaban el trato con «alianzas de casamientos».

El emperador revelaba haber prometido al rey Francisco que el segundo hijo de este se casaría con la infanta María, con Milán como dote. A pesar de este solemne compromiso, continuó, tanto él como la emperatriz habían estipulado en sus testamentos «en caso que no tuviéresemos otro hijo que el dicho príncipe, como ha subcedido», que María se casaría con uno de los hijos de Fernando y que ambos, juntos, gobernarían los Países Bajos. Este asunto había adquirido una importancia clave con los «movimientos y motines» de los Países Bajos, dado que «la diversidad de los vecinos y multitud de sectas contra nuestra sancta fe y religión, fundados so color de libertad y gobierno nuevo y voluntario, que podría causar no solamente su entera perdición y apartarse de nuestra casa y linaje, más aún su enajenación de nuestra sancta fe y religión». De modo que el emperador estaba dispuesto a incumplir sus promesas tanto a Francisco como a Fernando «para que queden [los Países Bajos] al dicho príncipe, nuestro hijo, y él suceda en ellas si es posible». Advertía a Felipe que este resultado implicaba serios riesgos; de manera que, si al final, «dispusiéramos de las dichas tierras para la dicha nuestra hija y en favor del dicho casamiento, será por obviar a los inconvenientes antes dichos y por el gran bien de la Cristiandad, y del dicho nuestro hijo, beneficio, reposo y tranquilidad de los reinos y otros estados y tierras que ha de heredar».

Las Instrucciones del emperador también establecían la política que Felipe debía seguir hacia otros tres Estados: Portugal, Saboya e Inglaterra. La infanta Juana debía casarse con el heredero al trono portugués, el príncipe Juan; los franceses debían evacuar Saboya, arrebatada al duque, cuñado

de Carlos; y, en lo que respecta a Inglaterra, la consanguinidad también obligaba al «dicho príncipe, nuestro hijo, a tener» a su prima María Tudor «por encomendada, y asistirla y favorecerla cuanto convenientemente fuere posible».

Este extraordinario documento, en el que se habla de secretos que Carlos no había revelado a nadie más, ni siquiera a su hermano, testimonia la gran confianza que tenía depositada en su hijo de doce años; pero dado que el príncipe era demasiado joven para llevar a la práctica ninguna de tales políticas, es indudable que el César pretendía que Felipe lo compartiera con su «gobernador», el cardenal Tavera; con Cobos, quien estaba completamente al tanto de las políticas del emperador al haber acompañado a su señor en sus anteriores viajes; y también con Zúñiga, su ayo y mayordomo, a la sazón también miembro del Consejo de Estado. Si Carlos moría en el extranjero, estos tres hombres serían los que debían guiar todas las empresas del príncipe.

Dado que Carlos sobrevivió, estas Instrucciones nunca tuvieron que ser aplicadas, pero en ellas el monarca identificaba varias cuestiones que dominarían la política exterior española durante el resto del siglo: la primordial importancia de mantener buenas relaciones con la rama austriaca de la familia y de concertar matrimonios con sus parientes de la familia real portuguesa; la necesidad de separar Milán, o bien los Países Bajos, de España; la responsabilidad de restaurar Saboya a su duque; y la obligación de defender el catolicismo y a la pretendiente católica al trono en Inglaterra. Por otra parte, el documento revelaba tres actitudes que socavarían la política exterior española durante un siglo: el excesivo secretismo, el desdén por las promesas solemnes y la renuncia a entregar cualquier territorio. Así, las Instrucciones de Carlos de 1539 subrayaban de forma sorprendentemente clara tanto las fortalezas como las debilidades de la monarquía que su único

hijo «ha de heredar».

Durante los dos años siguientes, en ausencia de sus padres y hermanas, la educación de Felipe quedó bajo el exclusivo control de Zúñiga, cuyos completos informes al emperador nos permiten seguir la evolución de sus responsabilidades. Para empezar, la vida religiosa del príncipe cambió radicalmente a raíz de la muerte de su madre, y concentró cada vez más su devoción en el santo cuyo nombre llevaba, san Felipe. El 1 de mayo, día de San Felipe y Santiago, Felipe había recibido la orden del Toisón de Oro (1533) y se había recuperado de la viruela (1536) —hechos ambos que demostraban que el santo cuidaba de él—, y en la misma fecha de 1539 su madre había muerto. Esta coincidencia reforzaba la devoción de Felipe por su patrón, porque sugería que el santo había intervenido para acompañar a su madre hasta el cielo, y a partir de entonces combinaría la celebración del día de su santo con la conmemoración de la muerte de su madre. En 1541, tomó la primera comunión «por ser ya pasados los XIIII años, para lo qual se aparejó que a los viejos nos a dado ejemplo», escribió Zúñiga orgulloso al emperador, y «Vuestra Magestad deue dar gracias a nuestro señor que tiene hijo cristiano y en los demás bien inclinado y de buen entendimiento». Como muestra de ello, Zúñiga señalaba que de los treinta ducados que Felipe recibía cada mes «para lo que quisiere», daba «los XV por Dios». Felipe iba bien encaminado a convertirse en «el rey católico».[33]

También se estaba convirtiendo en un campeón de la caza. En 1541, comenzó a ir «a caça con los halcones, y a auido días de buenos buelos». En aquel momento, informaba Zúñiga, «aunque huelga mucho en lo de la ballesta, quando no puede gozar de aquello, huelga con los halcones y de qualquiera manera que sea en el campo». El príncipe también aprendía a luchar a caballo y a pie —el tesorero de la Casa de Felipe

compró «dos espadas para esgrimir» y «cuatro lanzas para correr Su Alteza a la sortija»—, y en 1543 Zúñiga declaraba que «Su Alteza está muy bueno y el más gentil hombre de armas de esta corte»; añadiendo un poco más adelante «[sabe] combatir a pie y a cauallo muy bien».[34]

Como era habitual, Zúñiga se mostraba menos elogioso en relación con los estudios del príncipe, aunque en junio de 1541 informaba al emperador de que

> de doss meses acá tengo más esperança que solía que a de gustar más del latín de lo que yo pensaua, de que yo holgaría mucho, porque lo tengo por parte muy principal en un príncipe ser buen latino, así para saberse rregir a sý como a otros; specialmente quien espera tener debaxo de sý tanta diferencia de lenguas, es bien saber bien una general por no se obligar a saberlas todas.[35]

La precisión temporal relativa a los «doss meses» no era accidental. En 1540, «entendiendo que el studio que se hazía con el príncipe no era de mucho provecho», Zúñiga puso de manifiesto su personal insatisfacción con el maestro Silíceo, nombrando al humanista aragonés Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, «maestro particular» de su hijo mayor (y paje principal de Felipe), don Luis de Requesens. Carlos V pronto llegó a la misma conclusión y, a petición de Zúñiga, nombró a Silíceo para ocupar un obispado vacante lejos de la corte, con el requerimiento de que «el dicho maestro se ocupe en la visitar parte del año».[36] En febrero de 1541, visto que Calvete era tanto «hombre muy docto» como «limpio de sangre» (esto es, que no tenía antepasados judíos ni moros), Carlos lo nombró «por maestro de gramática para que enseñe a todos los pajes que son y fueren del dicho príncipe».[37] Al poco tiempo otros tres instructores le asistían: el valenciano Honorato Juan, un alumno del famoso humanista Juan Luis Vives, para enseñarle matemáticas y arquitectura; el cordobés Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, cronista del emperador, para la historia y la geografía; y el toledano Francisco de Vargas Mexía, para la teología. Aunque los cuatro preceptores eran españoles (si bien

de distintas partes de la península), cada uno había viajado extensamente por Europa y poseía una visión cosmopolita que ampliaría los horizontes del príncipe y sus compañeros de estudios en la corte.

Desde el primer momento, Calvete mostró su clara visión pedagógica. En 1541, compró 140 libros y los mandó encuadernar expresamente para el príncipe, duplicando sobradamente el tamaño de su biblioteca. La mayoría de dichas obras estaban escritas en latín, bien por autores clásicos como César, Cicerón, Plauto, Séneca, Terencio o Virgilio, o por humanistas modernos entre los que estaban Erasmo (*Adagios* y *Enquiridion o manual del cauallero christiano*), Vives (*De anima et vita*) y —el más sorprendente de todos— Felipe Melanchthon, principal lugarteniente de Lutero (*De arte dicendi*). A pesar del predominio de las obras en latín, Felipe se convirtió en el primer monarca español en leer en griego (llegó a poder abordar las obras de Homero y algunos otros poetas griegos en su lengua original) y también aprendió algo de hebreo y arameo, de manera que pudo estudiar la Biblia en sus idiomas originales. El príncipe también adquirió una gramática de árabe y «un libro del alcorán que mandó su alteza comprar». [38]

Este último lo compró el príncipe durante un largo viaje durante el cual el emperador llevó a su hijo a Navarra, Aragón, Cataluña y Valencia para que fuera reconocido como su heredero; pero Calvete, Juan y Sepúlveda —todos los cuales acompañaban a Felipe— aprovecharon cada oportunidad para enseñarle las distintas lenguas, culturas y tradiciones de sus nuevos vasallos. El príncipe también se reunió con el embajador del sah de Persia y un hermano del rey del Congo, y recibió de fray Bartolomé de las Casas una copia manuscrita de su *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. Por ultimo, cuando llegó la noticia de que los franceses habían sitiado

Perpinyà, la segunda ciudad de Cataluña, Sepúlveda lideró un debate entre los cortesanos sobre la mejor manera de salvarla, que supuso el primer contacto de Felipe con la guerra.

Cuando la corte regresó a Castilla, Calvete gastó mucho dinero en la adquisición de más libros en latín que apoyaran su ambiciosa estrategia pedagógica. Las obras de historia —escritas por autores medievales y clásicos, así como por humanistas modernos— constituían la categoría más numerosa (la cuarta parte de todos los libros comprados entre 1535 y 1545), seguida muy de cerca por la teología (el quince por ciento del total), si bien la mayoría de las disciplinas estaban representadas. Cada vez que Felipe y sus tutores finalizaban una obra, parece ser que Calvete añadía el signo de la almohadilla (#) antes de pasar a otra; esto sugiere que, para 1545, cuando terminó su formación académica oficial, Felipe había estudiado y analizado varios cientos de libros de una amplia variedad de materias. También conoció a muchos eruditos. Durante su visita a Salamanca en 1543, a la edad de dieciséis años, el primer día «gastó toda la tarde en ver las escuelas y oyó algunas liçiones y asistir a unas conclusiones» de un catedrático de la universidad y, al día siguiente, «Su Alteza acabó de oýr a todas los catedráticos que le restauan del día pasado y asistió a unas conclusiones que tubo en derecho… y así salió muy tarde».[39] [⇒]

No obstante, el proyecto pedagógico de Calvete presentaba algunas lagunas. La biblioteca del príncipe contaba con pocos libros de leyes y artes militares (aunque tenía una edición de lujo en dos tomos de las *Siete Partidas* entre los primeros y copias de los textos clásicos de Vegecio y Eliano entre los últimos) o escritos en cualquier idioma moderno aparte del español. Felipe no recibió ninguna instrucción formal en francés, italiano o cualquiera de las restantes lenguas habladas por sus súbditos. Esta importante carencia era reflejo de una

decisión deliberada: dado que el latín era una lengua universal, Zúñiga pensaba que «es bien saber bien una general por no se obligar a saberlas todas» y el emperador estaba de acuerdo con él, insistiendo en que hasta que su hijo hubiera dominado el castellano y el latín, los demás idiomas podían esperar. «[No] sería malo tanbién saber algo de la [lengua] francesa, mas no querría que, por tomar la una, las dexássedes entranbas». Felipe nunca dominó el francés: casi nunca lo escribía; y cuando en 1576 el embajador francés le leyó una carta de su rey, Felipe admitió «para decir la verdad, entendí poco della» porque «no entiendo muy bien el francés».[40]

Pese a su limitada competencia en lenguas modernas, su amplio y profundo aprendizaje humanista explica no solo su facilidad con el latín, sino también su marcado estilo en castellano y su seguridad en sí mismo (por no decir arrogancia) a la hora de debatir en torno a casi cualquier aspecto de la actividad intelectual: sobre arquitectura con los arquitectos, sobre geografía e historia con ministros y académicos, y aun sobre teología con los papas.

Felipe también continuaba participando en actividades de placer. Las cuentas de su casa registran la compra de bolos, tiro, pelota, tejos, ajedrez, cartas y «unos guantes para jugar a la pelota». También se divertía con el humor de bufones y locos (un gusto que mantendría a lo largo de toda su vida), y continuó disfrutando de la música. Su capilla incluía un coro compuesto por dos sopranos, dos contraltos, dos tenores, cuatro bajos y dos organistas, uno de ellos el «músyco tañedor de órgano» de su madre, y, tras mandar reparar los órganos de su capilla en 1540, el príncipe siempre los llevó con él en sus viajes. Las composiciones e interpretaciones de Antonio de Cabezón deleitaban hasta tal punto al príncipe que se llevó al organista ciego con él en sus viajes al norte de Europa entre 1548 y 1551. El príncipe también tenía contratado al

compositor Luis de Narváez, autor de *Los seys libros del delphín de música de cifra para tañer vihuela* (1538), quien le enseñó a él y a sus hermanas a tocar la vihuela. Entre el personal de su casa se incluían un «maestro de bezar a danzar», que enseñaba a bailar a todos los niños de la familia real, y un pintor, quien instruía al príncipe cuando este se ponía a llenar «un libro de ojas grandes que pedió su alteza para pintar en él». Unos primeros dibujos de la mano del propio Felipe han sobrevivido en los márgenes de dos de sus libros, realizados probablemente en torno a 1540-1541, la misma época en la que adquirió su «libro de ojas grandes» [véase lámina 4]. Debido a todas estas actividades, el gasto de la Casa del Príncipe casi se duplicó entre 1540 y 1543, fecha para la cual su servicio ascendía ya a unas doscientas cuarenta personas, y se requerían veintisiete mulas y seis carros para transportar todos sus efectos cada vez que Felipe se trasladaba de una a otra de las residencias reales.[41]

Dondequiera que fuese, Felipe llegaba precedido de su guion, símbolo inequívoco del elevado estatus que lo distinguía del resto de los componentes de la corte, y lucía su propio escudo de armas y su sello (estampado con toda claridad en las encuadernaciones de piel de sus libros). También tenía su propia divisa: «*Nec spe nec metu*» («Ni por esperanza ni por miedo»). En marzo de 1541, con el permiso especial de su padre, el príncipe «corrió la sortija» a la cabeza de un grupo de cinco caballeros «con máxcara, donde le corrieron otros muchos y lleuó el precio muy dignamente». Cinco meses después, informaba Zúñiga, «Su Alteza está muy bueno y no con poca voluntad, si tuuiese libertad, de yr a seruir a su padre» tomando parte en el ataque de Carlos sobre Argel, una «libertad» que el emperador le negó. No obstante, su ayo y sus preceptores mantenían al príncipe ocupado: como Zúñiga comentó con clara ironía en octubre de 1541, «de armas y libros y virotes y saetas sería Su Alteza malo de hartar».[42]

Tres meses más tarde, el emperador anunció que Felipe se casaría con la princesa María Manuela de Portugal, hija de la hermana de Carlos y el hermano de Isabel, y, por tanto, prima de Felipe por ambas partes de la familia. El príncipe ya llevaba pensando en la procreación desde que era un niño de ocho años: cuando doña Estefanía de Requesens dio a luz a una hija, Felipe le dijo «que ell volia que èsta y totes les que jo parís fosen damas de sa muller».[43] Tras la muerte de la emperatriz, Carlos empezó a interesarse en proteger la pureza sexual de sus hijos, separando a Felipe de sus hermanas, algo que disgustó a todos ellos. Durante algún tiempo la presencia de su padre compensó para Felipe la ausencia de sus hermanas, dado que el emperador pasaba mucho tiempo con su hijo, instruyéndole en el arte de gobernar tanto durante un periplo por la Corona de Aragón como después de su regreso a Madrid. Es indudable que la intención de Carlos era que estas lecciones tuvieran un carácter fijo, pero cuando estalló una nueva guerra con Francia, en mayo de 1543, tuvo que abandonar España para hacerse cargo personalmente de las operaciones. Esta vez,

> de nuestro propio motu y cierta ciencia, deliberada voluntad y poderío real absoluto de que en esta parte queremos usar y usamos como reyes y señores naturales, no reconociendo superior en lo temporal, eligimos y señalamos, constituimos y nombramos al dicho príncipe don Phelipe para que sea nuestro lugarteniente general y governador de los dichos nuestros reynos y señoríos.[44]

Asunción del cargo

Al no poder ya impartir sus lecciones verbalmente, Carlos escribió —justo antes de salir de España hacia Italia— algunos juegos de Instrucciones para ayudar a su hijo en su nueva y ardua tarea. Una «Instrucción general» enumeraba sus poderes y responsabilidades como gobernador de Castilla. Mandaba que hiciera algunas de sus devociones públicamente; que «coma públicamente; y que dispusiese algunas horas del día para que oy[g]a a los que le vinieren a hablar, y reciba las peticiones y

memoriales que le dieren, y los remita». Sobre todo, le conminaba a obedecer en todo a una junta compuesta por tres principales consejeros: Tavera, Cobos y don Fernando de Valdés, presidente del Consejo Real. Sin embargo, el emperador firmó otro documento el mismo día titulado «La restricción del poder del príncipe», que enumeraba una serie de cosas que Felipe no podía hacer, a pesar de los, en apariencia, plenos poderes otorgados en la «Instrucción general». La mayoría de ellas estaban relacionadas con la labor de patronato que solía recaer en la Cámara de Castilla —«[q]ue no se despache legitimaciones de hijos de clérigos» y «[d]e las cosas que vacaren de la yglesia queda reservada a mí la provisión de arçobispados y obispados y abbadias»—, aunque algunas eran más generales, «que no se dé expectativas, pues yo no las doy» y «[q]ue los indios no se den ni encomienden sin expresa orden mía».[45]

Acto seguido, el emperador zarpó hacia Italia; pero al día siguiente vientos adversos le obligaron a refugiarse hasta el 12 de mayo en el puerto de Palamós, donde continuó trabajando en nuevas Instrucciones para su hijo. Un juego tenía un carácter muy personal, y Carlos lo escribió con su propia y angulosa letra para «daros la informaçión que yo supiere y entendyere, de cómo en esta gouernación os auéys de guiar».[46] El César esperaba que «no enbargante que vuestra edad es poca para tan gran cargo», Felipe superaría todos los obstáculos gracias a su fe religiosa, virtud y fuerza de voluntad. Concretamente, por un lado, «seed deuoto», no «permytays que heregías entren en vuestros reynos» y «fauoreçed la Santa Inquisición». Por otro, le daba prácticos consejos: «Auéys de ser, hijo, en todo muy tenplado y moderado. Guardaos de ser furyoso, y con la furya nunca executáys nada. Seed afable y humilde»; «Guardaos mucho de no dar, ny de palabra ny por escrito, promesa de cosa de poruenyr ny espectatiua, pues

ordynaryamente no se sygue buen sucesso de anticipar el tienpo en cosas semejantes»; «Daréys, hijo, las audyencias necessaryas, y seréys blando en vuestras respuestas y paçiente en el oýr; y también auéys de tener oras para ser entre la jente visto y platicado».

Luego, el emperador se refería al «gouierno de vuestra persona». Lamentando no poder aconsejarle en todo —«[es] inposible acordarse de todo, y que tanbién, como se dize, ay sienpre más casos que leyes»—, Carlos instaba a su hijo para que tuviese «a don Joan de Çúñiga por vuestro relox y despertador, y que seáys muy pronto a oýrle y tanbién en creerle». En este punto, el tono de la carta se hacía más tajante: «Como os dixe en Madrid —escribía Carlos, dando testimonio de anteriores conversaciones íntimas entre padre e hijo—, no auéys de pensar que el estudyo os hará alargar la niñez»; y, continuaba, «sy a todos es necessaryo [el estudio], pienso, hijo, que a vos más que a nadye, porque veys quantas tierras auéys de señorear en quantas partes, y quan distintas están las unas de las otras». «También, hijo», continuaba,

> auéys de mudar de vida y la comunicación de las personas. Hasta hagora todo vuestro aconpañamiento han sydo niños, y vuestros plazeres los que entre tales se toman. D[e] aquí adelante no auéys de allegarlos a vos, syno para mandarles en lo que han de seruir. Vuestro acompañamiento principal ha de ser de onbres viejos y de otros de edad razonable.

En concreto, «no haréys tanto caso de locos» (un consejo que su hijo no pudo o no quiso obedecer).

Finalmente, el emperador pasaba a un tema mucho más íntimo: las relaciones sexuales. «Hijo, plaziendo a Dyos, presto os casaréys» y, para un joven, le advertía, el sexo «suele ser dañoso, asý para el creçer del cuerpo como para darle fuerças, muchas vezes pone tanta flaqueza que estorua ha hazer hijos y quita la vida como lo hizo al prínçipe don Joan, por donde vyne a heredar estos reynos». El emperador compartía la común

(aunque errónea) creencia de que el heredero de los Reyes Católicos, Juan de Trastámara, que en todo lo demás debía servir de modelo a Felipe, había muerto a consecuencia de una inmoderada actividad sexual con su joven esposa; y Carlos no tenía intención de permitir que su hijo siguiera su ejemplo con María Manuela de Portugal. Daba por sentado que su hijo todavía era virgen («tengo por muy çierto que me auéys dicho verdad de lo pasado y que me auréys conplido la palabra hasta el tienpo que os casáredes»), y a continuación pedía que el príncipe mostrara la misma contención después de su matrimonio. «Os ruego y encargo mucho que, luego que auráys consumydo el matrimonyo, con cualquier achaque os apartáys [de la princesa] y que no tornáys tan presto ny tan a menudo a verla; y quando tornáredes, sea por poco tiempo».

Carlos apoyaba esta sorprendente petición no solo en el más puro chantaje —«¡myrad qué ynconuenyente serýa sy vuestras hermanas y sus maridos os uvyessen de heredar, y qué descanso para mi vejez!» si el exceso de sexo mataba al príncipe —, sino también en medidas prácticas, como encargar a Zúñiga que vigilara el cumplimiento del príncipe a este respecto.

> Y para que en eso no aya falta, avnque ya de aquý adelante no auéys menester ayo, quiero que en este caso solo lo sea Don Joan; y conforme a lo que os dixe en su presençia, no hagáys en ello, syno lo que él os dixere, y por esta le mando que en aquello, avnque os enojasse, no dexe de dezir y hazer todo lo que en él fuere, para que asý lo hagáys.

Para asegurarse por completo de que su hijo le obedecería, «tengo ordenado al duque y duquesa de Gandýa que hagan lo mismo» con María Manuela una vez llegara a España «y la tengan apartada de vos, syno a los tienpos y ratos que para vuestra vida y salud se podrá çufrir». Resulta difícil imaginar medidas más proclives a crear un grave complejo sexual en un joven de dieciséis años.

Aunque el matrimonio entre ambos jóvenes se ratificó el 13

de enero de 1543, a Carlos le pareció bien que la ceremonia se demorase varios meses. Lejos ya los rigores del verano, estación en la que el calor y el exceso de actividad sexual podrían haber supuesto un peligro para la salud del príncipe, la ceremonia no pudo aplazarse más. El 12 de noviembre de 1543 Felipe se vistió «todo de raso blanco, que parecía palomo blanco», y durante muchas horas bailó y cenó con su prometida; luego descansaron hasta las cuatro de la madrugada, hora en la que Tavera les casó; y solo entonces se retiraron «al aposento de la Princesa». ¡Pero no por mucho tiempo! Solo «estuvieron juntos hasta dos horas y media que don Juan de Zúñiga vino y los llevó a echar en otra cama en su aposento». Además, después de menos de una semana de tener cuidadosamente racionado el tiempo que pasaban juntos, la pareja dejó Salamanca para ocupar aposentos separados en Valladolid. Allí, «a cabo de algunos días que dormían apartados, le a salido a Su Alteza una sarna muy penosa». Zúñiga oscilaba entre el alivio de que aquello significaba «que no dormía con su muger» y la preocupación de que «la sarna aún dura, y él nunca la tuvo en su vida». Luego, una vez la «sarna» hubo remitido, Felipe mostró cierta frialdad hacia su esposa: «cuando están juntos, parecía que [Felipe] estaba por fuerza y, en sentándose, se tornaba a levantar e irse; y que veía a la princesa poca veces».[47] Tanto Carlos como Zúñiga le reprochaban esto a Felipe, pero, probablemente, a ninguno de ellos se le pasó nunca por la cabeza que el humillante régimen establecido hubiera hecho que, a ojos de su joven esposo, María Manuela pareciese un arma letal.

Carlos contribuyó a aumentar el bochorno de su hijo enviando estas instrucciones de carácter tan íntimo no directamente a Felipe, sino a Zúñiga, con órdenes de que el príncipe debía leerlas «en su presençia, para que él tenga cuydado de acordaros las cosas en ella contenydas, todas las

vezes que él vyere que fuere menester». El emperador también sugería que su hijo podía mostrarlas tanto a Cobos como a Silíceo, cuyo criterio y experiencia el emperador encomiaba sin reservas. Parece improbable que Carlos insistiera en este procedimiento para humillar a su hijo (aunque el resultado fuera inevitablemente ese), sino más bien para convencer a los tres ministros por él nombrados de que les había abierto su corazón tanto como lo había hecho con su propio hijo.

Sin embargo, tenía mucha más información que trasladar al joven príncipe que nadie más debía conocer. El 6 de mayo, dos días después, firmó otra extensa carta ológrafa a su hijo: «Os escribo y enbýo esta [instrucción] secreta que será para vos solo, y asý la ternáys secreta y debaxo de vuestra llave sin que vuestra mujer ny otra persona viua la vea». Se trata del consejo de carácter político más sobresaliente puesto por escrito por un soberano de principios de la época moderna.[48]

Esta vez, Carlos comenzaba expresando «el pesar que tengo de aver puesto los reynos y señoryos que os tengo que dexar en tan estrema necessydad» y de que, si moría, «lo de la hazienda quedará tal que pasaréys gran trabajo, porque veréys quan corta y cargada queda por hagora»; pero «lo que he hecho a sydo forçosamente y por guardar my honrra, pues sin ella menos my pudyera sostener y menos os dexara». La primera lección «secreta» que Felipe aprendió de su padre fue, por tanto, que el dinero siempre debe postergarse ante la «honra y reputación». Más adelante, el emperador esbozaba la estrategia militar que pretendía seguir contra Francia y sus aliados, y en qué lugares tenía planeado encontrar los efectivos y fondos necesarios para llevarla a la práctica, para que su hijo supiera qué tenía que hacer, «sy fuesse [yo] preso o detenydo en este viaje».

A continuación llegaba la parte más destacable de la carta, precedida de otra orden que «convyene que sea para vos solo y

lo tengáys muy secreto»: un análisis feroz de las cualidades de cada uno de los ministros en cuyas opiniones el príncipe tendría que confiar «sy Dios dispusiesse de mý en este viaje». El emperador refería de nuevo a su hijo «lo que os dixe» en persona «de las paçiones y parçyalydades y casy vandos que se hazían o están hechos entre mis criados», pero en esta ocasión entraba en más detalles. Dado que sus principales ministros «son las cabeças del vando, todavýa los quize juntar porque no quedássedes solo en manos de uno [de] ellos». El emperador urgió a su hijo: «Tratad los negocios con muchos y no atáys ny obligáys a uno solo, porque aunque es más descansado no [o]s conviene».

Luego, Carlos iba repasando las virtudes y los defectos de sus consejeros, uno por uno, empezando por don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, duque de Alba. Aunque «en lo del estado y de la guerra» el emperador consideraba a Alba «el mejor que hagora tenemos en estos reynos», lo había excluido de la junta de ministros del príncipe «por ser cosa del gouyerno del reyno, donde no es bien que entran grandes». El duque, proseguía el emperador,

> pretende grandes cosas y crecer todo lo que él pudyere, aunque entró santiguándose muy humilde y recogido. Myrad, hijo, qué hará cabe vos que soys más mozo. De ponerle a él ni a otros grandes muy adentro en la governación os havéys de guardar, porque por todas vías que él y ellos pudyeren, os ganarán la voluntad, que después os costará caro.

Felipe siguió este consejo: durante todo su reinado, ni Alba ni ningún otro «grande» entraron nunca «muy adentro en la governación».

El emperador evaluaba a continuación a sus otros ministros. Sobre Zúñiga escribía: «Aunque él se os figura algo áspero, no se lo devéys de tener a mal». Dado que «todos los que avéys tenydo y ternéys cabe vos son blandos y os desean contentar, haze por ventura parecer a don Joan áspero», pero

«sy él uvyese sydo como los otros, todo uvyera ydo a vuestra voluntad, y no es esto lo que convyene a nadye, ny aun a los viejos quanto más a los moços». No obstante, proseguía Carlos, nadie era perfecto y «en don Joan ay dos cosas a my parecer. La una que él es algo apasionado», pues Zúñiga competía con Cobos y, en algunos casos, con el duque de Alba en busca de influencia y patrocinio. El otro defecto era «una poca de codycia», pero, según creía el emperador, «no podéys tener mejor no más fiel concejero que don Joan». Carlos también criticaba a los otros ministros que tendrían que asesorar a su hijo. Cobos «no es tan gran trabajador como solýa», se quejaba Carlos, y, aunque «hasta hagora a tenydo poca paçión, hagora paréçeme que no le falta». Sin embargo, «el tiene esperiencia de todos mis negocios y es muy informado de [e]llos: bien sé que no hallaréys persona que de lo que a ellos toca podáys mejor seruyr que d[e] él». Por eso, «bien será que os sirváys dél como yo lo hago, no a solas ny dándole más autorydad que la que por las instruxiones está contenydo».

Contradiciendo lo que había escrito dos días antes, tenía poco bueno que decir de Silíceo: aunque «conocéysle y todos le conocemos por muy buen onbre, cierto que no ha sydo ny es él que más os convyene para vuestro estudyo. Ha deseado contentaros demazyadamente». Ahora, «vos os confessáys con él. No serýa bien que en lo de la conçiençia os deseasse tanto contentar como ha hecho en el estudyo. Hasta aquý no ha avydo inconvenyente», continuaba Carlos, pero «de aquý adelante lo podrýa aver y muy grande». Por tanto, el emperador le recomendaba que, aunque Silíceo quedara «vuestro capellán major, tomássedes un buen frayle por confessor». Carlos terminó, como en sus anteriores instrucciones, reconociendo que estas cuestiones «están tan oscuras y dudosas que no sé cómo dezyrlas ny qué os devo de aconsejar sobre ellas, porque están llenas de confusiones y contradiçiones, o por los negoçios

o por la conçiençia. En estas dudas, siempre os atened a lo más seguro, que es a Dyos».

Las Instrucciones ológrafas escritas por Carlos V en mayo de 1543 —tan directas, tan personales, tan perspicaces— causaron una tremenda impresión en su hijo. En 1559, cuando Felipe se negó a prometer una merced a un solicitante, le explicó a un consejero que lo había hecho porque «Vos sabéis quán enemigo soy de prometer, aun lo que puedo cumplir, porque es una lición que aprendí de Su Magestad muy muchos años ha que me lo dixo. Y heme hallado bien quando lo he cumplido y muy mal de lo contrario. Y así estoy determinado de no hazerlo más», una clara referencia al consejo dado por Carlos dieciséis años antes: «No dar, ny de palabra ny por escrito, promesa de cosa de porvenyr ny espectativa». En 1560, cuando dos inquisidores le interrogaron, afirmó: «Digo que el emperador, mi señor, que está en gloria, me dexó cuando se partió destos reynos el año de [15]43 una instrucción en que, entre otras cosas, me mandaba que hiziese rezidir a los perlados en sus iglesias». E igualmente en 1574, cuando Felipe pensó que podía salir de España y dejar a su esposa como regente, uno de sus ministros sugirió basar las Instrucciones para ella en las que Felipe había redactado cuando se había marchado a Inglaterra veinte años antes; pero el rey prefirió «los de quando yo comencé a governar el año de [15]43» porque «los recuerdos que entonces me dexó el emperador de su mano» contenían información sumamente útil.[49]

«Su Alteza rrecibió las Instrucciones con los poderes que Vuestra Magestad le inuía para la gouernación —informaba Zúñiga a Carlos el 8 de junio de 1543— y a começado a entender con mucho quydado en lo que se le manda, y hasta aquí con buena voluntad». El mismo día, Tavera enviaba al emperador una evaluación igualmente elogiosa: «El príncipe ha comenzado a usar de los poderes que Vuestra Majestad le

envió, y en lo que hasta agora se ha visto, tiene más cuidado y buena manera en los negocios de lo que su edad demanda». Aunque la intención del emperador había sido que su hijo solo firmara «las nóminas y otras cédulas y prouisiones que hiziere para lo tocante a su casa» como «el Príncipe», Zúñiga descubrió «que el príncipe don Juan [de Trastámara], en lo que proveía en sus tierras y en lo que firmaba de otras cosas, ponía "Yo, el príncipe"», y enseñó a Cobos «muchas escrituras firmadas del príncipe don Juan, que haya gloria» para demostrar «que esto era preeminencia de los príncipes de Castilla». Sin esperar la aprobación imperial, los dos ministros resolvieron que así lo hiciese Felipe.[50] Felipito se había convertido ya en un «verdadero prínçipe de Castilla».

2. Un príncipe del Renacimiento, 1543-1551

Gobernador de las Españas

Nada más convertirse en «gobernador de las Españas», Felipe recibió un torrente de cartas de su padre ausente en el que las noticias y los consejos se entremezclaban con órdenes y peticiones. Así, en octubre de 1543, al final de una carta en la que le pedía dinero y soldados españoles para proseguir su guerra con Francia, Carlos añadía una posdata de su puño y letra en términos muy cercanos al chantaje: «Hijo: vos veréis lo que en esta os escribo, y estoy muy cierto que viendo quanto me va en ello que haréis todo lo que podréys como buen hijo es obligado, para no dexar a vuestro padre en necesydad en tal coyunctura». Apenas dos semanas más tarde, el emperador volvía a coger la pluma para insistir en su petición y mantener la presión: «Hijo», gimoteaba, «lo que os tengo escrito no se puede ny deve excusar: […] y asý, hijo, os torno a encargar que mostréys en esto cuanto buen hijo me soys».[51]

Sin duda espoleado por los ministros nombrados por su padre, a quienes les preocupaba que una excesiva presión fiscal pudiera generar desasosiego, el príncipe no tardó en adoptar las defensas utilizadas por los servidores de la monarquía Habsburgo en todas partes. Lo primero era posponerlo, llegando a dejar pasar varias semanas antes de responder a su padre, «porque ha sido menester junctar consejos y otras personas» para celebrar muchas reuniones «en mi presencia» en las que «se platicó y trató» sobre la respuesta más adecuada. Felipe luego afirmaba que Castilla estaba demasiado exhausta para poder financiar nada más allá de los costes de su propia defensa. Cuando contestó a la petición de su padre, ¡en febrero de 1544!, fue para decirle:

> Suplico a Vuestra Magestad cuan encarescidamente puedo, y que se tome esto que aquí digo con la intención y sinceridad de ánimo que se escribe. Lo cual no se hace poner por poner estorbo a Vuestra Magestad en sus grandes pensamientos, los cuales son de su imperial valor, sino por traerle a la memoria la cualidad de los tiempos, la miseria en que está la república cristiana, las necesidades de sus reinos, los daños que de tan grandes guerras se siguen por más justas que sean, y el peligro en que están por estar las armadas enemigas tan cercas, y la poca forma que hay para resistir y proveer en tantas partes.

Poner fin a todas las guerras era la única estrategia realista, enfatizaba Felipe, «si Vuestra Magestad no quiere caer en algún inconveniente irreparable».[52]

Sin embargo, para cuando llegó la carta, Carlos ya había hecho entrar en acción sus «grandes pensamientos» y había invadido Francia, avanzando hasta situarse a ochenta kilómetros de París. En septiembre de 1544, Francisco I se vio obligado a firmar un acuerdo de paz. El emperador fue generoso: para asegurarse una paz duradera, le ofreció a su adversario uno de los territorios que había generado el conflicto, así como que el hijo menor del rey francés, el duque de Orleans, pudiera casarse con la hija de su hermano Fernando, llevando Milán como dote, o con la hermana de Felipe, María, que aportaría los Países Bajos. Carlos prometió anunciar cuál era su preferencia en un plazo de cuatro meses y, entre tanto, pidió a su hijo que planteara la «alternativa» tanto a María como a sus consejeros españoles.

El príncipe disfrutaba de una buena posición para llevar a cabo ambos turnos de negociaciones. El secretario Francisco de los Cobos había alabado la conducta y la destreza del príncipe en una carta al emperador. «Se ha adelantado su saber e su suficiencia», comentaba, de modo que lo que para otros

> parece imposible pudiera facer, lo faze [Felipe] con su entendimiento tan grande e con su alta comprehensión. Sus diversiones continuas son un puro entregamiento perpetuo al trabajo e a los negocios importantes de su reyno. Siempre está pensando e discurriendo en las cosas de la buena guvernación e justicia, sin dar entrada ni parcialidad al ocio ni a la lisonja ni a ningún vicio. Sus comunes tratos e conversaciones son siempre en estos negocios e con hombres

maduros.

Tampoco, continuaba Cobos, permitía Felipe que los «hombres maduros» le dominaran. Por ejemplo, recientemente había demostrado que «sabe mui bien las partes e entereza del duque de Alba». Cuando, en una reunión del consejo, el príncipe preguntó «algunas cosas de guerra para Francia, y el duque con su natural braveza respondió que, viviendo el emperador su señor y él, acabarían prestamente con Francia». En este punto (recordando, sin duda, el consejo de su padre de no dejar nunca que el duque se le subiera a las barbas), Felipe, «sin descomponerse», le dijo así: «Después del emperador, mi señor, ninguno ocupa antes lugar que yo. Y soy de parecer que quien esto no sabe entender e se alaba a mi presencia, o no me conoce o procura mi descontentamiento».[53] El duque no replicó.

En cuanto recibió el encargo de su padre de discutir la «alternativa», Felipe se erigió en el único conducto entre Carlos y la infanta, dado que, como él mismo señaló, su hermana «con ningún otro se abriría como conmigo». Pasó las siguientes dos semanas en conversaciones con María, y después convocó al Consejo de Estado, donde adoptó una táctica de «divide y vencerás» que en lo sucesivo constituiría el distintivo de su estilo de gobierno.[54] «Mandé que cada uno dixesse su parescer» en la reunión, donde cinco ministros —entre ellos Zúñiga— se mostraron a favor de retener los Países Bajos, por una combinación de razones económicas, estratégicas y sobre todo dinásticas: formaban parte del patrimonio de Carlos (mientras que la adquisición de Milán había sido mucho más reciente) y por eso no debía entregarlos. Entonces, debía casar al duque de Orleans con la hija de Fernando y asignarles como dote Milán. Otros cinco ministros, incluidos el duque de Alba y Cobos, argumentaron lo contrario: «el Stado de Milán es muy importante y necessario, no solo para defensión y conservaçión

de Nápoles y Sicilia, pero aun para la seguridad y quietud destos reynos, y para tener Vuestra Majestad libre el camino de poder yr y venir de Alemaña y Flandes y poder sacar y proueer, assý de Spaña, como de Alemaña, la gente y otras cosas que serán necessarias» para la defensa de cualquier territorio de la monarquía en caso de un ataque francés. Milán constituía el centro y el corazón de todo el imperio. El príncipe se ponía de parte del segundo grupo, e instaba a su padre a permitir el casamiento de Orleans con su hermana María, y el consiguiente sacrificio de los Países Bajos. Llegado el momento, Carlos rechazó el consejo de su hijo y declaró que Orleans se casaría con la hija de Fernando y adquiriría Milán; solo la muerte del duque le permitió evitar la entrega, perpetuándose de este modo la estratégicamente sobredimensionada herencia de Felipe.[55]

Aunque en este punto su opinión no prevaleció, Felipe pronto dejó sentada su independencia en asuntos de menor calado. Apenas tres meses después de que el emperador dejara España, en 1543, Silíceo le informó de que Felipe «entiende lo que lee en Latín, haunque va afloxando el exercicio asý por razón de estar ocupado en la gouernación que Vuestra Majestad le ha encomendado, como por entender en exercicio de armas y cauallería». El temprano final de su educación académica quizá sea una de las razones de la inmadura escritura de Felipe: incluso sus primeras cartas están escritas con una letra regular pero deslavazada [véase lámina 5].[56] Sus prácticas con las armas y la equitación también le causaron ciertas decepciones. En marzo de 1544, Felipe rompió una lanza contra su adversario, luchó con un hacha hasta que se hizo pedazos y, finalmente, utilizó su espada. Dos meses más tarde, partió hacia una isla del río Pisuerga, cerca de Valladolid, para participar en un torneo basado en un episodio de la novela caballeresca *Amadís de Gaula*; pero la barca que transportaba a una de las «cuadrillas»

al campo de combate se hundió bajo el peso de todos los caballeros pertrechados con sus armaduras. Aunque logró ponerse de nuevo a flote y los desaliñados caballeros retomaron su rumbo hacia el enclave isleño, la barca volvió a hundirse y tuvieron que renunciar al torneo. Dos años después, en otro intento de recrear las aventuras de Amadís en una isla cercana a Guadalajara, Felipe se hirió ambas piernas durante el combate y tuvo que caminar con bastón. Según uno de sus compañeros de justa, «de postura en la silla ninguno de los hombres a el Rey Don Phelipe, mi amo, hiço ventaja», aunque añadía con tono irónico: «No quebrava muchas lanzas».[57]

A pesar de la carga de la «gouernación» y los peligros de su «exercicio de armas», Felipe seguía siendo un voraz lector. El tesorero de su casa compraba velas expresamente para las horas de lectura del príncipe: algunas para «la cámara de su alteza en los días cuando estudia apretadamente en el retrete» y otras para «las noches que estudia apretadamente en la rrecámara» (su traslado del íntimo «retrete», donde Felipe guardaba sus objetos personales, incluidos sus libros, a la más amplia «rrecámara» por las noches reflejaba sin duda la salida de sus cortesanos).[58] El hecho de que el tesorero repitiera «apretadamente» para justificar el gasto inusualmente alto en velas da testimonio del entusiasmo del príncipe por la lectura. Gracias a algunas eclécticas adquisiciones —como los tratados políticos y militares de Nicolás Maquiavelo (que más adelante llevarían la inscripción de «Prohibido por el catálogo del Concilio [de Trento]») y las obras de destacados humanistas europeos como Pico della Mirandola (sobre la inmortalidad del alma) y Johannes Reuchlin (sobre cabalística)— y a los ejemplares que había recibido como regalo y que estaban dedicados a él, la librería del príncipe se incrementó a más de ochocientos volúmenes en 1548, y en ella se incluían obras escritas y publicadas por toda la Europa occidental.[59]

Rebeldía juvenil

Aunque la precoz erudición del príncipe complacía a su padre, otros aspectos de su conducta no lo hacían tanto. En una carta a Zúñiga en 1544, Carlos hacía notar que no «me auysáys de cómo en las otras cosas lo hace mi hijo. Sy es porque no hay que decir, huélgome mucho; sy es porque pensáys que me importunaŕya dello, no dexéys de hacerlo en las cosas que os pareçyere que serán necessarias saberlas, y del modo que se deurán de reprehender».[60] Evidentemente, esta invitación provocó una avalancha de quejas (curiosamente, la carta se encuentra hoy desaparecida) porque, dos meses más tarde, Carlos le enviaba a Zúñiga una extensa respuesta en la que repasaba «las cosillas que començavan por mi ausencia». El César reconocía que algunas de ellas ya no podían remediarse. En lo que respectaba a la negligencia en sus estudios,

> Visto que ya es casado y está ocupado en negocios y no en edad para que aproveche apretarle a más de lo que él por su voluntad y gusto quisiere tomar, nos parece que lo que buenamente se pudiese encaminar en ello se haga y no estrechándole tanto que lo venga a aborrecer del todo.

Por el contrario, criticaba a menudo cuatro «cosillas»: «la desorden que ay y tiempo que se pierde en acostar y levantar, desnudar y vestir»; «la tibieza que ay en la devoción que solía tener y en el confesar»; «la sequedad que usa con su mujer en lo esterior»; y, sobre todo, «lo que pasó en Cigales en casa de Perejón [el bufón predilecto del príncipe] y del salir de noche». El emperador ordenaba que «si esto fuere empeorando o se hizo con algún fin», Zúñiga debía informarle inmediatamente en una carta especial escrita en clave.[61]

Estas «cosillas» formaban todas ellas parte de una estudiada «rebeldía juvenil» del príncipe, ahora de casi dieciocho años, ante los entrometidos y humillantes intentos de su padre por controlarle.[62] Sobre todo, aunque la ley castellana establecía que el matrimonio llevaba consigo la independencia de la

autoridad paterna, Carlos obligaba a Felipe a vivir separado no solamente de su esposa, sino también de sus hermanas. El resultado era previsible: parece que el príncipe inició en aquella época una relación con doña Isabel Osorio, una dama de su madre y después de sus hermanas.[63]

Algunos testimonios fiables, aunque indirectos, de este amorío han sobrevivido. La entrada correspondiente a 1589 en la *Historia de Felipe II*, elaborada por el bien informado cortesano Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, afirmaba que «murió doña Isabel de Osorio, que pretendió ser mujer del rey don Philipe II; que ella tanto se ensalçó por amarle mucho». Según aseguraba Cabrera de Córdoba, doña Isabel dejó al morir ocho mil ducados de renta y sesenta mil en muebles y dinero. Poco después, el *Tratado del príncipe instruido* compuesto por don Francisco de Gurrea y Aragón, otro bien informado cortesano, elogió a Ruy Gómez de Silva, su sumiller de corps, por «lo mucho que hizo este cavallero para desempeñar al Rey de los amores de doña Ysabel Osorio».[64] Es cierto, Felipe le mostró mucho favor a doña Isabel: en 1557 le otorgó juros por valor de dos millones de maravedíes, a los que más tarde se sumaron otros regalos; cinco años más tarde, ella compró algunas villas de la Real Hacienda y las convirtió en un señorío (Saldañuela, cerca de Burgos) donde construyó un palacio exquisito, conocido en la zona, no por casualidad, como «la casa de la puta». Cada ventana tenía imágenes de Isabel y Felipe. Es difícil explicarse cómo Isabel, hija de una culta pero modesta familia burgalesa, descendiente por un lado de un rabino y por el otro de un obispo comunero, pudo hacer todo esto sin la ayuda de Felipe. Las evidencias sugieren la existencia de un «amorío» entre el príncipe e Isabel de 1545 a 1548.

A pesar de todo, y de la supuesta «sequedad» de Felipe hacia su mujer, la muerte de la princesa María Manuela en julio de 1545 tras dar a luz a un hijo, llamado Carlos en honor de su

abuelo paterno, lo dejó devastado. El príncipe se retiró a un monasterio y ni siquiera escribió a su padre durante un mes «porque la congoxa y pena con que estava de hauer reçibido una tan gran pérdida no me dio lugar a ello». Solo se reincorporó a la vida pública, le explicó a Carlos, «[para] no hazer falta aquí a los negocios destos reynos que Vuestra Majestad me tiene encomendados»; e incluso entonces «vine aquí a palaçio, donde estoy con algún encerramyento, aunque negoçiando siempre todo lo que conuiene». No hay razón para dudar de la profundidad de la «congoxa y pena» de Felipe: su esposa solo tenía diecisiete años de edad y había muerto mientras daba a luz a su hijo, una consecuencia directa de la intimidad sexual que su padre le había instado a moderar. Su único consuelo era que «al infante [don Carlos] he hallado bueno y se conosçe que cada día va mejorando».[65]

La posición de Felipe también mejoró al fallecer los «hombres maduros» que Carlos había dejado para que guiaran a su hijo. En agosto de 1545 murió el cardenal Tavera, el más experimentado de todos sus consejeros, y poco después lo siguió don Juan de Zúñiga, su «relox y despertador» (y vigilante de su vida sexual). El duque de Alba partió para Alemania, donde el emperador había decidido suprimir el protestantismo por la fuerza, y poco después la enfermedad obligó a Cobos a retirarse a sus fincas, donde murió. En junio de 1546, Carlos reconoció formalmente lo inevitable: como preludio a la investidura de Felipe como duque de Milán, un feudo imperial, el emperador firmó una declaración en la que el nuevo duque «*hoc petentem a nobis emancipauimus, et a nostra manu et nexu paternae potestatis quantum ad secundum Imperii nostri leges opus fuerit*».[66]

El príncipe no perdió tiempo en explotar su emancipación. Sus cartas a Carlos comenzaron a ser más francas. Por ejemplo, en diciembre de 1546, apuntaba a su padre que todos los

ingresos de Castilla se habían anticipado hasta el año 1550, de manera que «para dezir verdad a Vuestra Magestad como se deve dezir, esto se puede tener por muy acabado. Ny se sabe de donde ny como se cumpla y buscar arbitrios y formas de donde se ayan dinero».[67] Además, por un lado, Felipe empezó a promover para los puestos vacantes a hombres a los que conocía personalmente, aunque de este modo crease tensiones en el gobierno entre aquellos cuya primera lealtad era para el emperador y los que se lo debían todo a él. Por otro, el príncipe tomó una importante iniciativa institucional: creó un archivo para la Corona de Castilla en el castillo de Simancas, y también mandó trasladar allí la colección de libros de los Reyes Católicos desde el Alcázar de Segovia, aparentemente con la intención de crear una biblioteca regia en la fortaleza-archivo. Se había terminado su «rebeldía juvenil».

Un programa para el imperio

En 1547 Felipe viajó de nuevo a Monzón, en Aragón, donde durante seis meses presidió las Cortes Generales de Cataluña, Valencia y Aragón. Dado que cada una de las Cortes se reunía separadamente, el príncipe tenía que pasar de un edificio a otro para escuchar las quejas y solicitar impuestos a cada una de ellas, y, según un miembro de su séquito, «vi yo a Su Alteza en las Cortes de Monçón estar noches sin dormir hasta la mañana hasta concluyr y dar fin a negocios».[68] Nada más concluidas las Cortes, Carlos decidió que sus hijos mayores, Felipe y María, debían abandonar España y reunirse con él en Alemania, y poco después dictó una larga evaluación política para su heredero. En este documento, considerado su testamento político, el emperador exponía sus pensamientos acerca de los estados y los gobernantes que Felipe conocería en sus viajes, y sobre su lugar en el mundo Habsburgo. Ofrecía al príncipe una verdadera «gran estrategia» para el imperio y, al igual que en el

caso de las Instrucciones que había recibido cinco años antes, el príncipe se esforzaría el resto de su vida por alcanzar las metas expresadas por su padre en este documento.[69]

El emperador comenzaba con prácticamente la misma invocación a la confianza en Dios con la que iniciaba sus Instrucciones de 1539 y 1543: «Por principal y firme fundamento de vuestra buena gobernación, debéis siempre concertar vuestro ser y bien de la infinita benignidad de Dios, y someter vuestros deseos y acciones a su voluntad». La defensa de la fe católica debía continuar siendo la principal responsabilidad de Felipe. El emperador lamentaba el coste de «las guerras [que] me han sido movidas tantas veces y en tantas partes» para defender sus posesiones, aunque, como apuntaba con cierta arrogancia, «Dios me ha ayudado de manera que aunque he pasado muchos trabajos, con su ayuda (y Él sea alabado por ello) los he guardado, defendido y añadido a ellos otros de harta calidad e importancia». Aunque ahora sus súbditos necesitaban desesperadamente la paz,

> evitar la guerra y apartarse a ella no sea siempre en la mano de los que lo desean, como muchas veces me ha sucedido; y siendo esto más dificultoso a los que tienen tantos y tan grandes reinos, Estados y señoríos, y algunos lejos de otros, como Dios por su divina bondad me ha dado y os dejaré, placiendo a Él, y que [e]sto consiste en la buena o mala voluntad de los vecinos y otros potentados.

Felipe debía estar dispuesto a luchar, en caso necesario, para preservar lo que era suyo.

Carlos procedía luego a analizar la situación internacional, y especialmente los desafíos con los que su hijo se podía encontrar. «La razón y spiriencia de lo pasado», comenzaba,

> han mostrado que sin mirar y tener cuidado de entender los andamientos de los otros potentados y estados de las cosas públicas, y tener amistades e inteligencias en todas partes, sería difícil y como imposible poder vivir descansadamente, ni obviar, proveer ni remediar lo que se podría emprender contra vos y vuestros reinos, estados y señoríos que tuviéredes; y tanto más siendo, como es dicho, apartados unos de otros, e ymbidiados.

Así pues, «la principal y más cierta amistad y confianza que

debéis tener es con el Rey de Romanos, mi hermano [Fernando]». Por un lado, tras la muerte de Carlos, Fernando se convertiría en el miembro de la dinastía Habsburgo con más experiencia política, y sus consejos serían de incalculable valor para su sobrino; por otro, al convertirse Fernando en el siguiente emperador, su apoyo reforzaría el control de Felipe sobre el norte de Italia y los Países Bajos —ambos feudos imperiales— y permitiría una comunicación fácil y segura entre ellos.

En segundo lugar, Felipe debía mantener siempre buenas relaciones con el papa, a pesar de que, como en sus anteriores consejos escritos, el emperador reconocía que aquello era más fácil de desear que de cumplir. «Cuanto al papa presente», Paulo III, «ya sabéis cómo se ha habido conmigo», se quejaba Carlos; y aunque manifestaba la esperanza de que un cambio de pontífice mejoraría las cosas, identificaba un área que continuaría generando conflictos: las reclamaciones papales sobre sus derechos de patronato eclesiástico. Por tanto, recomendaba a su hijo tratar a los futuros pontífices «con la sumisión que un buen hijo de la Iglesia lo debe hacer, y sin dar a los papas justa causa de mal contentamiento vuestro»; pero «de manera que no se haga ni intente cosa prejudicial a las preeminencias y común bien y quietud de los dichos reinos». Felipe no debía conceder nada, ni siquiera a la cabeza de la Iglesia católica.

Como en sus anteriores consejos escritos, Carlos presentaba a los franceses como la mayor amenaza potencial para la seguridad y afirmaba que, aunque siempre había tratado de vivir en paz con ellos, sus reyes habían «pasado muchos tratados de paz y tregua, los cuales nunca ha guardado, como es notorio, sino por el tiempo que no ha podido renovar guerra o ha querido esperar de hallar oportunidad de dañarme con disimulación». Y, sin duda, reflexionaba, seguirían haciéndolo

para tratar de reconquistar territorios y derechos a los que él les había obligado a renunciar —tanto en los Países Bajos como en Italia— en virtud de anteriores tratados; fuera como fuese, Felipe no debía ceder. El emperador solo veía una solución duradera a la hostilidad francesa: Felipe debía casarse con una princesa de la Casa de Valois a cambio del compromiso francés de abandonar todos los contenciosos y evacuar todos los territorios que habían ocupado, incluidos los de sus aliados, como por ejemplo el duque de Saboya.

En cuanto al imperio español de ultramar, Carlos reiteraba sus preocupaciones sobre la legalidad de los repartimientos restituidos a los colonos en América e instaba a su hijo a encontrar un equilibrio entre «[el] respecto de guardar la preeminencia real, y lo que toca al bien común de las dichas Indias». En cuanto a los Países Bajos, Carlos admitía que no sabía qué hacer: si sería mejor legárselos, junto con España, a su hijo, o entregárselos a María cuando ella se casara con Maximiliano, hijo de Fernando. En todo caso, prometía que «se determinará todo con vuestra venida, placiendo a Dios».

Carlos únicamente guardó silencio en lo que concierne a un asunto importante. Aunque bombardeaba a Felipe con directrices sobre cómo debía comportarse con otros miembros de la dinastía, no mencionaba que ahora tenía otro hijo. En 1546, el emperador tuvo un amorío con la hija de un alcalde de Ratisbona (Regensburg), Bárbara Blomberg —una adolescente de exactamente la misma edad que Felipe—, que dio a luz un hijo suyo. Los oficiales del emperador compraron su silencio y enviaron al niño a España para que fuera criado en secreto por unos padres adoptivos, pero Felipe no supo nada de todo esto hasta que Carlos murió *(véase capítulo 7)*.

Antes de que Felipe tuviera tiempo de asimilar este complejo documento, su padre cambió sus planes respecto a

una cuestión vital. Aunque «tenýamos determinado que vinyese con vos la infanta doña Marýa», le explicaba a su hijo, ahora pensaba que «será cosa más convinyente que fuera allá el príncipe Maximiliano, my sobrino, a efectuar el matrymonio que se ha tratado» y que ambos, María y Maximiliano, actuaran como regentes. Felipe debía permanecer en España hasta que Maximiliano llegara y recibiese instrucción en «lo que os pareciera que devía ser advertido», y fuera «prevenydo y conocido de los Grandes y otros caualleros que vinyesen a la corte, y los consejeros y minystros que con él huviesen de negociar»; en otras palabras, Felipe debía proporcionarle el mismo tipo de íntimo asesoramiento a Maximiliano que él mismo había recibido a través de las Instrucciones secretas del emperador un lustro antes, una señal notable de la confianza del emperador en su hijo.[70]

El felicísimo viaje

En octubre de 1548, una vez iniciados Maximiliano y su nueva esposa en los misterios del gobierno, el príncipe fue libre para salir de España por primera vez. Naturalmente, no viajaba solo: entre su séquito de casi quinientas personas se incluían muchos hombres que luego habrían de dominar el poder durante la primera mitad de su reinado. Algunos de los mayores, como el duque de Alba, ya habían dejado su impronta, pero junto a ellos iba una generación más joven que por primera vez aparecía en la escena pública: Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, duque de Sessa, que más adelante gobernaría Milán y comandaría la flota del Mediterráneo; don Pedro de Guzmán, conde de Olivares, que se convertiría en embajador en Roma y virrey de Nápoles y Sicilia; don Gabriel de la Cueva y don Perafán de Ribera, futuros duques de Alburquerque y Alcalá, que ejercerían de virreyes tanto en España como en Italia; don Gómez de Figueroa, conde de Feria, que sería el principal

asesor del rey en asuntos referentes a Inglaterra; y don Claudio de Quiñones, conde de Luna, futuro embajador de Felipe en la corte imperial y en el Concilio de Trento. Mientras viajaban juntos por Europa, estos hombres forjaron una estrecha relación entre sí y con el príncipe, y muchos de ellos también se integraban en la red de relaciones construida por Ruy Gómez, un caballero portugués nacido en 1516 que había servido a la emperatriz y a su hijo como paje, y, según sus contemporáneos, «el mayor privado de esta ciencia que ha habido en muchos años» hasta que «al fin todos los negocios de paz y guerra trataba con él».[71]

El príncipe y su distinguido séquito embarcaron en una flota de galeras y, tras considerables demoras debidas al mal tiempo, partieron de Cataluña el 1 de noviembre de 1548. Según Calvete de Estrella, uno de los preceptores que acompañaron a Felipe, y autor, más tarde, de un detallado relato de lo que él denominó el *Felicíssimo Viaje*, el propio príncipe hizo «muy bien marinero» en este su primer viaje (aunque en dos ocasiones la «boticaria» de su casa tuvo que proporcionarle «sequillos entrevastados para la mar»), si bien otros sufrieron repetidos vómitos y «a ningunos de quantos van en esta galera hace tanta impresión la mar como al duque de Alba, que le trata muy mal».[72] Tras pasar casi un mes en el mar, el príncipe y sus cansados compañeros desembarcaron en Italia, donde las autoridades (o sus representantes) acudieron a recibirle, tanto para expresarle su lealtad como para asegurarse su apoyo en algunas disputas que tenían pendientes con el emperador. En palabras del embajador del duque de Mantua, «este príncipe no se mueve, no come, no bebe, ni habla, sin que todas sus acciones sean notadas y escritas por el mundo entero».[73] Este escrutinio del «mundo entero» comenzó en Génova, donde la costumbre del príncipe de hablar poco y en voz tan baja que apenas resultaba audible creó una impresión

desfavorable. Peor efecto aún causó días después, cuando él y su séquito cabalgaron majestuosamente por las calles de Génova en dirección a la catedral. A pesar de que las principales damas de la ciudad atestaban los balcones de las casas durante todo el recorrido, ataviadas con sus mejores galas, saludando y haciendo reverencias, Felipe «ni con su gorra ni con una inclinación de su cabeza, reconocía a nadie», por lo que el ánimo de todos los genoveses quedó «malíssimo satisfecho de Su Alteza». Incluso Vicente Álvarez, otro miembro de la Casa del Príncipe que escribió un relato presencial del *Felicíssimo Viaje* por lo general obsequioso, comentaba que la conducta del príncipe durante su periplo por el norte de Italia «desplugo a los naturales» y que corrían rumores de que «era su Alteza demasiadamente grave y desconversable».[74]

La popularidad de Felipe comenzó a mejorar a partir de su llegada a Trento, una pequeña ciudad situada en la frontera entre Alemania e Italia donde acababa de celebrarse un concilio general de la Iglesia católica. El príncipe recibió la bienvenida de una delegación alemana que incluía a numerosos luteranos, entre ellos el duque Mauricio de Sajonia —fue su primer contacto con protestantes—, y participó con ellos, como con los católicos, en largas comidas regadas con abundante bebida y seguidas de varias horas de baile. El príncipe y sus compañeros prosiguieron su viaje hasta Bruselas, donde el 1 de abril de 1549 Felipe entró para reunirse de nuevo con su padre, después de seis años de separación.[⇒]

El problema de los Países Bajos

Aunque en su último papel de aviso Carlos había prometido a su hijo que en relación a la sucesión de los Países Bajos «se determinará todo con vuestra venida», ya había alterado la posición constitucional de sus tierras flamencas cuando convenció a la Dieta del Sacro Imperio Romano para que

reconociera las diecisiete provincias de los Países Bajos en las que gobernaba, tanto las que había heredado como las que había adquirido, como un solo Círculo Imperial (*Reichskreis*). Esta medida reforzaba los poderes del gobierno central de Bruselas en tres aspectos importantes: primero, excluía la jurisdicción imperial (salvo en un puñado de pequeños señoríos semiautónomos de las provincias del este); segundo, garantizaba la exención de los compromisos religiosos que habían permitido que el luteranismo floreciera en Alemania; y por último, obligaba a los miembros alemanes de la Dieta a defender los Países Bajos en caso de ataque. Una vez hubo unido todas sus posesiones neerlandesas, nuevas y viejas, Carlos tomó la trascendental —y desastrosa— decisión de que Felipe le sucediera como soberano en todas sus posesiones.

La llegada de Felipe a Bruselas en abril de 1549 dio lugar a festejos y justas en los que el príncipe tomó parte, aunque con algunos contratiempos. En una ocasión compitió con don Luis de Requesens, su antiguo paje, y este, sin reconocer a su señor, «encontróle en la çelada, y por ser poco stofada le adormió y cayó en la tierra». Carlos corrió preocupado al lado de su hijo, pero, «después que le desarmaron y vieron que no estaua herido, truxeron a su cama». Tras un breve reposo, Felipe volvió al torneo [véase lámina 6].[75] Después de los placeres, el trabajo: el emperador persuadió a las asambleas representativas (*Staten* y *États*) de cada provincia no solo de que reconociesen a su hijo como su legítimo heredero, sino también de que acordasen, al margen de sus privilegios, que a partir de entonces todas seguirían los mismos protocolos de sucesión y elegirían al mismo soberano a fin de permanecer unidas para siempre.[⇒]

Con el objeto de consolidar esta innovación, Carlos y Felipe emprendieron un viaje por las provincias meridionales —Flandes, Artois, Hainaut y Brabante—, donde, en presencia del emperador y su hermana (y regente) María de Hungría, las

autoridades de cada municipio y provincia, una detrás de otra, juraron solemnemente aceptar a Felipe como su próximo soberano. En todas partes la comitiva real fue objeto de una calurosa bienvenida y de magníficos agasajos, y Felipe pudo hacer gala repetidamente de su destreza a caballo, tomando parte en juegos de cañas y justas. Por doquier el príncipe se encontraba con alegorías —representadas tanto en arcos triunfales como en obras de teatro— en las que se hacían exageradas soflamas. Algunas comparaban a este y a su padre con David y Salomón, o con Atlas y Hércules; una llegaba a mostrar al

> príncipe al natural sacado, puesto de rodillas delante de Dios Padre, el qual tomava la espada de la Potencia y se la ponía en la mano derecha, y luego le dava el sceptro que tenía el primer ángel y tomava al real corona de oro adornada de ricas perlas y piedras preciosas, y le ponía sobre la cabeça del príncipe; y él muy alegre con aquel don de la divina mano, se levantava dándole infinitas gracias por ello.[76]

Era, quizá, demasiado para un hombre que tan solo acababa de cumplir veintiún años [véase lámina 7].

Los prolongados festejos dejaron exhausto a Carlos, quien regresó a Bruselas para recuperarse, mientras que el príncipe pasó dos meses visitando las provincias septentrionales de Holanda, Utrecht, Overijssel y Güeldres (Gelderland). Durante su viaje de ciudad en ciudad, se encontró con centenares de sus futuros súbditos y emprendió innumerables jornadas de «turismo». En Rotterdam, la comitiva real visitó la casa de Erasmo («cosa notable, por aver nacido en ella varón tan señalado en letras», apuntaba Calvete) y admiró la estatua de madera del gran humanista (en 1557 Felipe pagaría para que fuera sustituida por otra de piedra policromada).[77] Durante esta etapa de su Gran Viaje, el séquito del príncipe incluía no solo a Alba, Feria, Ruy Gómez y otros cortesanos españoles, sino también a algunas caras nuevas que tendrían un papel importante poco más tarde en la rebelión de los Países Bajos: el

príncipe Guillermo de Orange, el marqués de Bergen, el conde de Egmont, el de Hornes y Antonio Perrenot de Granvela, obispo de Arras y luego cardenal Granvela. Durante la prolongada estancia de Felipe en los Países Bajos, estos hombres se conocieron unos a otros, así como también al príncipe heredero.

Felipe pasó el invierno de 1549-1550 en Bruselas, recibiendo casi cada día lecciones de su padre sobre cómo gobernar con eficacia su disperso imperio, así como celebrando fiestas, bailes, cacerías y justas. También tuvo tiempo de apreciar el refinado estilo de vida de los Países Bajos, donde tanto su padre como María de Hungría y Granvela habían acumulado impresionantes colecciones de arte. María mantenía varios palacios, donde el príncipe pudo admirar su biblioteca, sus tapices, su galería de retratos de familia —realizados por distinguidos pintores italianos y flamencos— y sus demás obras de arte (todas las cuales él heredaría). Granvela, por su parte, le presentó a los artistas de los que era mecenas, incluido Antonis Mor (Antonio Moro), a quien el príncipe pagó doscientos ducados en 1549, tal vez por el gallardo retrato que le hizo en esa época. Cuando regresó a España en 1559, Felipe se llevó a Moro con él.

El 1 de mayo de 1550, Carlos y Felipe celebraron solemnemente el undécimo aniversario de la muerte de la emperatriz. A final del mes, ambos partieron de Bruselas para encontrarse con la Dieta Imperial, a la que el César había convocado en Augsburgo para debatir con su hermano Fernando otra importante cuestión sucesoria. Dándose cuenta de que un gobernante residente en España nunca sería capaz de defender con eficacia la unidad de los Países Bajos, Carlos decidió asegurarse para Felipe el título imperial, exigiendo que Fernando lo nombrara su sucesor. Aquello constituía una tremenda injusticia: a Fernando, que ostentaba el título de rey

de romanos (o heredero reconocido a la dignidad imperial), Carlos siempre le había prometido que su sucesor sería su hijo Maximiliano. Profundamente herido por la brusca exigencia de Carlos, pero reacio a ofender a su hermano mayor, a quien reverenciaba, Fernando sugirió que Felipe, así como sus sucesores, pudiera convertirse en vicario (lugarteniente) imperial en Italia. Era una razonable sugerencia, que ofrecía a Felipe mucho más de lo que al final recibió, pero Carlos la rechazó y reiteró en cambio su demanda de que Fernando debía reconocer a Felipe, y no a Maximiliano, como su sucesor inmediato.

Las cosas alcanzaron su punto crítico a finales de 1550, cuando la obstinación de Fernando llevó a Carlos a exclamar indignado: «Es necesario dejar claro quién es el emperador: vos o yo».[78] Tras este incidente, los hermanos dejaron de hablarse durante varias semanas. La parálisis solo terminó con la llegada de Maximiliano, ansioso de hacer valer sus derechos en Alemania, dejando a su esposa embarazada como única regente en España, y de María de Hungría, acompañada de Granvela, a quienes Carlos había hecho llamar con la intención de que convencieran a Fernando para que cambiase de opinión. Tras varias semanas de acalorada discusión, en marzo de 1551 las distintas partes aceptaron una serie de acuerdos ideados en su mayoría por Granvela y escritos de mano de la propia María. La sucesión imperial se alternaría entre las dos ramas de la familia: Fernando heredaría el título imperial, pero prometiendo delegar los poderes imperiales sobre Italia en Felipe y contribuir a la elección de su sobrino como rey de romanos; luego, una vez accediera al título imperial, Felipe garantizaría la elección de Maximiliano como su sucesor. Maximiliano accedió a regañadientes a dar su consentimiento verbal, aunque se negó a firmarlo; finalmente Fernando lo firmó, pero continuó resentido.

Al parecer, Felipe permaneció ajeno a estas tensiones, tal vez porque Carlos y sus hermanos disputaban en francés, un idioma que el príncipe no hablaba. Cuando, casi cuarenta años después, un secretario le envió unos documentos en los que alababa la piedad de su difunto tío, «por lo que Vuestra Magestad holgara de verlas», Felipe replicó con entusiasmo: «Yo conocí al emperador Fernando, que casi un año estuvimos en Agusan [Augsburgo] de Alemaña, el de 51, con el emperador mi señor que aya gloria, y le trate mucho porque nos aveníamos muy bien; y fuýmos en aquel tiempo muchas vezes acá juntos él y yo».[79] Evidentemente, Felipe había olvidado las semanas de tenso silencio. También omitía el hecho de que igualmente había pasado «muchas vezes acá juntos» con protestantes (dado que la ciudad de Augsburgo toleraba tanto el culto luterano como el católico, y los protestantes de todo el imperio atestaron las calles mientras se estuvo celebrando la Dieta). Durante casi un año, Felipe comió, bebió, cazó y habló con luteranos.

El príncipe no salió de Augsburgo con destino a España hasta mayo de 1551, siguiendo una ruta muy similar a la de su viaje de ida. En junio llegó a Trento, donde conocería a unos participantes en la segunda sesión del Concilio de la Iglesia: era el único príncipe seglar que asistía en persona. Muchos de los delegados españoles entrarían más tarde a su servicio: el doctor Martín de Velasco se convirtió en su principal asesor legal y fiscal; el obispo Álvaro de la Quadra serviría como embajador suyo en Alemania e Inglaterra; los teólogos fray Alonso de Castro y fray Bartolomé de Carranza le acompañarían a recatolizar Inglaterra; y fray Diego de Chaves sería confesor de su esposa, de su hijo mayor y, finalmente, suyo.

Felipe cruzó el Mediterráneo desde Italia —adonde nunca más volvería— acompañado por su primo Maximiliano, y llegó a España en julio de 1551. Su futuro suegro se apresuró a reunirse con María, mientras Felipe se quedaba tres semanas en

Barcelona, y luego dos semanas en Zaragoza con María, Maximiliano y los hijos de estos, incluida Ana, que por entonces tenía casi dos años y que se convertiría, años después, en la cuarta esposa de Felipe. Cuando ellos volvieron a Alemania, Felipe prosiguió su viaje hacia Toro para reunirse con su hermana Juana y con su propio hijo de seis años, don Carlos (quizá también con doña Isabel Osorio), después de casi tres años de separación.

Durante su «Felicísimo Viaje» el príncipe se había acostumbrado a una vida descansada, y estaba dispuesto a prolongarla. En Toro, según escribió a Maximiliano, pensaba «holgar unos ocho o diez días» donde «abemos acordado de hazer un torneo», seguido de un banquete. Felipe, sin embargo, estuvo ausente. Acababa de recibir dos noticias tremendas: la flota otomana había tomado Trípoli, uno de los últimos enclaves cristianos en el norte de África, y los franceses habían declarado la guerra. Jamás en su larga vida volvería a encontrar tiempo para «holgar unos ocho o diez días».[80]

3. Un imperio en transición, 1551-1558

Némesis

El príncipe Felipe regresó para gobernar España en 1551 con mucha más experiencia y mucha más autoridad que antes. Por ejemplo, cuando un prelado a quien Carlos había nombrado para representarle en el Concilio de Trento declinó su asistencia, Felipe informó con toda naturalidad a su padre de que «pensarse ha en otra persona, y Vuestra Magestad será avisado de lo que se hiciere». Cada vez que su padre demandaba más tropas o dinero, Felipe rehusaba altivamente porque «está todo lo de acá tan acabado y consumido». No tardaría mucho en llegar incluso a reprochar al emperador su derroche de dinero: «Muy humildemente suplico a Vuestra Magestad procure de dar orden en sus cosas y por donde se excusen los gastos, pues no hay forma ni manera para cumplirlos ni llebarlos adelante». Este cambio en el equilibrio del poder no pasó desapercibido. Como un cortesano español escribió crudamente a Felipe en 1552: «Suplico a Vuestra Alteza me mande responder al memorial que le di en Madrid, que todos sabemos que sin consulta de Alemania puede despachar todas las cosas».[81]

El príncipe pasó la mayor parte del invierno de 1551-1552 en Madrid, ciudad que a estas alturas ya parecía preferir a Valladolid como su sede administrativa, negociando con las Cortes de Castilla los fondos para asegurar que España y sus dominios italianos pudieran resistir cualquier ataque en la próxima primavera. Pero en abril de 1552 el rey francés no atacó Italia ni España: en cambio, invadió la Lorena y tomó el enclave imperial de Metz, mientras los protestantes de Alemania movilizaban un ejército contra Carlos. Fernando y

Maximiliano, distanciados del emperador debido al intimidatorio comportamiento de este en Augsburgo el año anterior, se declararon neutrales, mientras Carlos, peligrosamente aislado en Innsbruck, despachó a su hijo un desesperado llamamiento de que, «syn perder hora ni puncto de tiempo», le enviara tantos soldados españoles como le fuera posible. «Y sobre todo», añadió, «ternéis special cuydado de lo que toca a la prouisión del dinero, pues veys y conoscéis lo que va a nuestra honrra, reputación y conseruación de los stados que Dios nos ha dado y hauemos adquerido» (una nueva alusión directa al hecho de que lo que perdiera Carlos lo perdería también Felipe).[82]

Parece que el llamamiento dejó preocupado (y tal vez avergonzado) al príncipe. «Vista la necessidad que por dichas reuoluçiones hay de hallarse Vuestra Majestad con españoles para lo que se huuiere de hazer», le aseguraba a su padre, haría todo lo posible para reunir los mismísimos recursos que, muy poco tiempo antes, afirmaba no poder encontrar. Felipe ordenó al duque de Alba que movilizara a las tropas y acudiese con ellas en rescate del emperador; entre tanto, salió de Toro hacia Madrid para recaudar dinero. Al igual que había hecho en 1541 durante la jornada de Argel *(véase capítulo 1)*, también rogaba permiso para acudir al lado de su padre en este momento de necesidad —«Quisiera hallarme allí para servir a Vuestra Magestad en esta jornada», le escribía—, y ordenó que las galeras que transportaban al duque de Alba y sus tropas volvieran inmediatamente a España para llevarle a él también, «pues no parecería bien ni conbendría a my honra dejar a Su Majestad en este tiempo».[83]

Mientras aguardaba la respuesta de Carlos, Felipe regresó a toda prisa a Toro para despedirse de su hermana Juana antes de que esta partiera con destino a Lisboa para casarse con su primo, el príncipe heredero al trono portugués. Después viajó a

Aragón para encontrarse más cerca de la costa mediterránea cuando recibiera el permiso para reunirse con su padre, pero por mucho tiempo vivió «en la mayor confusión que nunca nadie estuvo por haber tanto tiempo que no tengo carta de Su Magestad, ni orden de lo que tengo que hacer».[84] Por fin Carlos prohibió a su hijo que abandonara España. Alababa su arrojo y su apoyo, pero la contribución de Felipe debía consistir en recaudar y enviar los fondos necesarios para mantener al ejército de Alba en su lucha por recuperar Metz, la mayor ciudad imperial de Lorena tomada por los franceses.

A pesar de que Carlos y Alba llegaron a comandar a un ejército de 55.000 hombres, tal vez la mayor concentración de tropas jamás reunida en la Europa del siglo XVI, Metz resistió. Poco antes de la Navidad de 1552, Carlos tuvo que renunciar al asedio y se retiró a Bruselas, donde sufrió un colapso físico y psicológico. Según escribía un ministro a principios de 1553, «la gota le maltrata y corre a menudo por todos los miembros y junturas y nervios de su cuerpo». Además, se veía aquejado por un catarro tal que «ny puede hablar ni quando habla es oýdo o poco entendido por los circunstantes de su cámara», y «las emorroidas se le hinchan y atormentan con tantos dolores que no se puede rodear syn gran sentimiento y lágrimas». Todos estos problemas, continuaba el ministro, habían dado al traste con el ánimo del emperador, que «está pensativo y muchas vezes y ratos llorando tan de veras y con tanto derramamiento de lágrimas como sy fuese una criatura».[85] Durante tres meses, el emperador se negó a mantener audiencias, aparecer en público o firmar ningún documento. María de Hungría asumió la dirección de los asuntos cotidianos de la monarquía mientras Felipe continuaba gobernando en España y Fernando en Alemania.

María sabía claramente que esta situación no podía durar y, en abril de 1553, persuadió a su hermano para que convocase

nuevamente a Felipe a Bruselas, pero solo después de que este último hubiera recaudado el suficiente dinero para sufragar otra campaña. «No solamente sería necesaria vuestra venida», afirmaba Carlos a su hijo, «más aún que fuese con tal provisión de dinero» para que «no fuésedes forçado, de luego en llegando, pedirles otras ayudas, que estando tan imposibilitados como están, es verisímil que no solamente no os cobrarían amor, mas sentirían (como los pueblos lo suelen hazer) los trabajos que les daríades doblemente». Nada más llegar Felipe con los fondos, Carlos le propuso volver a España «como por no dexar estos Estados en tales tiempos sin presencia de uno de nosotros». Felipe se haría cargo de todo lo demás.[86]

Esto no era en absoluto realista. Como Felipe le recordó a su padre, Castilla acababa de entregar la insólita cantidad de 4.500.000 ducados para la defensa de Italia, España y el Mediterráneo, así como para el asedio de Metz: el reino no podía dar nada más de momento, sobre todo teniendo en cuenta que una flota combinada de franceses y turcos acababa de tomar Córcega, arrebatándosela a sus guarniciones genovesas y poniendo en peligro de este modo las comunicaciones entre España e Italia. Sin ni siquiera consultar a su padre, Felipe envió de inmediato un contingente de tres mil soldados (así como el dinero necesario para su sostenimiento) a Génova, y autorizó otras medidas defensivas, reduciendo aún más los recursos disponibles para Carlos.

En busca de una nueva esposa

Casi de inmediato, la muerte de Eduardo VI, rey de Inglaterra e Irlanda, el 6 de julio de 1553, cambió la situación internacional. Pasados algunos días de incertidumbre, la hermanastra de Eduardo, María Tudor, una soltera de treinta y siete años de edad, subió al trono y acudió a Carlos, su primo, en busca de consejo. El emperador supo perfectamente sacar

partido de este golpe de suerte: le ofreció la mano de su hijo. Había calculado con sumo cuidado las ventajas para ambas partes: permitiría a Felipe gobernar eficazmente tanto España como los Países Bajos, incluso sin convertirse en sacro emperador romano; y proporcionaría a María un «marido que pudiese gouernar la guerra y supplir a otras cosas que son impertinentes a mugeres», facilitando tal vez una invasión de Escocia que «la sometiera al reino de Inglaterra» y una campaña para «recuperar Guyenne, injustamente en manos de quienes ahora la poseen [los franceses], y puede que incluso el reino de Francia». Además, la creación de un nuevo estado angloneerlandés que sería gobernado por el heredero de Felipe y María aseguraría el dominio Habsburgo del canal de la Mancha y el mar del Norte, para así «mantener a los franceses controlados y hacerles entrar en razón». A continuación, Carlos expuso a su hijo que ella sería su esposa ideal y, con escasa convicción, añadió: «No quiero hazer más de poneros en lo delante para que lo miréys y consideréys y me aviséys con diligencia lo que os parecerá, porque conforme a aquello se haga lo que más os satisfaga». Pero, efectivamente, la suerte estaba echada: las ventajas que se seguirían, escribía Carlos, «son tan notorias y grandes» que no era necesario explicarlas.[87]

Aun con un reino como dote, la oportunidad de casarse con su prima, doce años mayor que él, no agradaba a Felipe, pero aceptó lo inevitable. «Ya Vuestra Magestad sabe que como tan obediente hijo, no he de tener más voluntad que la suya, quanto más siendo este negocio de [tal] importancia y calidad», escribió a Carlos de su puño y letra, y otorgó plenos poderes para «tratar lo que a my toca» para concertar su segundo matrimonio.[88] Enseguida comenzaron unas duras negociaciones entre María y sus consejeros, por una parte, y los enviados de Carlos liderados por Simón Renard, el conde Lamoral de Egmont, por otra. Carlos insistía en que la unión se

consolidara «por palabras de presente», que tendrían efecto inmediato. Los ingleses, sin embargo, preferían proceder «por palabras de futuro», de manera que «el casamiento se tracte y solenize en persona de ambos, y que en presencia del pueblo prometáys de obseruar y guardar los tractados y capitulaçiones». Carlos envió entonces a su hijo los borradores de dos poderes diferentes, y le requirió firmarlos «conforme a essas minutas, para que se usse dellos lo que fuere neçessario, porque no se pierda tiempo y se prevenga a lo uno y lo otro».[89] Una vez más, el príncipe accedió.

Carlos y sus consejeros siempre eliminaban las informaciones desagradables de las versiones españolas de cada carta escrita en francés por sus enviados en Londres, confiados en que ni el príncipe ni sus asesores eran capaces de leer los originales. Escondían algunas enmiendas al tratado matrimonial añadidas por los consejeros de María a fin de salvaguardar la independencia de su reino y de su reina: que María no debía salir de Inglaterra; que cualquier hijo de la pareja heredaría no solo Inglaterra e Irlanda, sino también los Países Bajos; y que, si María fallecía antes que su marido sin dejar ningún heredero, la autoridad de Felipe en Inglaterra dejaría de existir. Además, aunque el tratado especificaba que Felipe «durante dicho matrimonio poseería y disfrutaría junto con su graciosa majestad, su esposa, el estilo, los honores y el real nombre de sus dominios» y prestaría «ayuda» a su mujer para gobernarlos, más adelante insistía en que «dicho noble príncipe deberá permitir y aceptar que su graciosa majestad y esposa ostente la plena disposición de todos los beneficios y títulos, tierras, rentas y frutos de dichos reinos y dominios, y que estos sean conferidos a aquellos que por nacimiento sean naturales de los mismos». Felipe no podría «conferir» ninguna clase de activos ingleses a sus súbditos de otros lugares. Por si estas restricciones no fueran lo suficientemente humillantes

para Felipe, los consejeros ingleses estipularon también que «el señor don Felipe deberá procurar en todo lo que esté en su mano, por el bien del dicho reino de Inglaterra, que se respete la paz entre los reinos de Francia e Inglaterra, y no dará motivo a ningún incumplimiento».[90]

Aunque los negociadores imperiales omitieron o minimizaron la importancia de estos nuevos acontecimientos en sus cartas a Felipe, ¡el príncipe lo sabía! El 4 de enero de 1554, incluso antes de que los representantes de su padre firmaran el tratado original, el príncipe ejecutó ante un notario una escritura en la que se establecía que «él aprobará y otorgará y jurará los dichos artículos a fin que el dicho su casamiento con la dicha sereníssima reyna de Inglaterra aya effecto, y no para quedar y estar obligado él ni sus bienes ni sus herederos y subcesores a la guarda ni aprobación de alguno de ellos, en especial de los en que encargare su conçiençia».[91] Tal «disimulación» (como se la denominaba en el siglo XVI) se convertiría en un rasgo característico del estilo de gobierno de Felipe II: cuando se veía obligado a actuar de una forma que no era de su agrado, hacía una declaración ante notario a fin de que las concesiones realizadas bajo coacción no lo comprometieran.

Felipe permaneció en España durante otros seis meses pese a las advertencias no solo de su padre, sino también de su tía María de Hungría, quien le escribió: «Os puedo asegurar que si estas tierras de acá no son asistidas, que las perderéis» (el tratamiento de «vos» enfatizaba la inexperiencia del príncipe).[92] Sin embargo, el príncipe no podía cumplir hasta que el papa concediera una dispensa para casarse con un pariente tan cercano, pero el 6 de marzo de 1554, con permiso de Felipe, Egmont se puso al lado de María Tudor mientras el canciller de Inglaterra consagraba la unión «por palabras de presente».

Pese a ello, el príncipe continuó en España. En lugar de viajar hasta la costa y embarcar en la flota reunida en La Coruña para transportarle a él y a su séquito a Inglaterra, cabalgó hacia la frontera de Portugal para recibir a su hermana Juana, ahora viuda, que actuaría como regente en España durante su ausencia. Como había hecho antes con Maximiliano y María, Felipe la instruyó en el ejercicio de su nueva función. Y realizó otra parada importante: había recibido un mensaje de su padre en el que este le pedía que fuese a Yuste, en Extremadura, y visitara el monasterio de la orden de los Jerónimos, cuya dedicación al rezo a menudo había atraído a los miembros de la familia real deseosos de retirarse del mundo. Si al príncipe le parecía adecuado, el emperador le instaba a construir allí un retiro para él, adyacente a la iglesia. Después de visitar el lugar en junio de 1554, Felipe firmó cédulas para los gastos iniciales.

Por fin, Felipe se trasladó a La Coruña y, mientras esperaba la llegada de un viento favorable que le llevara hasta Inglaterra, emitió sus mandatos definitivos para su hermana. Aunque afirmaba que se trataba de «la orden que Su Magestad [Carlos] e yo desseamos», las Instrucciones firmadas por el príncipe ignoraban o invalidaban explícitamente anteriores disposiciones de su padre. Por ejemplo, durante su ausencia, Juana y sus ministros no solo debían enviarle copias de toda su correspondencia con Carlos, sino también consultar a Felipe antes de tomar ninguna decisión importante relativa a España, Italia o América.[93] Por fin, con tesoro bastante para financiar su primera campaña en el norte de Europa y una flota lo suficientemente grande para disuadir cualquier intento de los franceses por interceptarla, Felipe salió de España por segunda vez el 13 de julio de 1554, para casarse con la reina de Inglaterra y tomar el relevo de su padre en los Países Bajos.

Felipe I, rey de Inglaterra

«Yo partí el viernes de La Coruña», escribía el príncipe, «y aquel día me mareé tanto, que para convalecer hube menester tres días en cama». El viaje de su enorme flota desde España hasta Inglaterra se hizo en solo siete días (una feliz circunstancia que tal vez pudo distorsionar el pensamiento estratégico de Felipe tres décadas más tarde, cuando planeó la invasión de Inglaterra).[94] Tanto enviados ingleses como flamencos le esperaban en Southampton, donde sus barcos atracaron: los ingleses le transmitieron los saludos y le entregaron regalos de María; los flamencos traían consigo la renuncia de Carlos a su título sobre Nápoles en favor de su hijo, que de este modo se convertía en rey por derecho propio en la víspera de su boda. Se trataba de un gesto gentil, y desde entonces Felipe firmaba sus órdenes como «el Rey Príncipe». Menos gentil fue el mensaje que siguió. En principio, la intención de Carlos era que su hijo se quedase en Inglaterra tan solo el tiempo necesario para consumar su matrimonio antes de dirigirse a los Países Bajos a tomar el mando, de modo que él pudiera retirarse a Yuste en septiembre. Ahora le ordenaba a Felipe que enviara las tropas y el tesoro, pero le prohibía que él los acompañara: su frase, «os lo impido», no dejaba ninguna duda de que el emperador había decidido comandar personalmente sus tropas una vez más, relegando a su hijo a un papel secundario.[95]

Mientras tanto, Felipe prosiguió su viaje desde Southampton hasta Winchester, donde tuvo su primer encuentro con su prometida. Según Juan de Barahona, un miembro de su séquito, «Su Alteza estubo muy cortesano con la rreyna, más de vna hora: hablando él en español y ella en francés, ansí se entendían». Luego, Felipe pronunció las únicas palabras en inglés de las que tenemos noticia: «*Good night, my lordes all*» (Buenas noches, señores). El 25 de julio, día de

Santiago, Felipe y María se casaron en la catedral de Winchester y, tras un banquete, los «duques y nobles de España» bailaban con «las ninfas más hermosas de Inglaterra» hasta las nueve, «cuando era hora de acostarse». «El rey se fue a la cama con la reina», escribió Barahona, añadiendo (quizá con la misma falta de entusiasmo que Felipe): «Lo demás desta noche, júzguenlo los que han pasado por ello».[96]

Su primera experiencia sexual dejó a María agotada; según Andrés Muñoz, un ayuda de cámara de Felipe, «no volvió a aparecer en público» en cuatro días.[97] Mientras María se recuperaba, su nuevo marido salía a cazar y hacer excursiones, acompañado de un numeroso cortejo en el que se incluían no solo veteranos como Alba, Ruy Gómez y el conde de Feria, sino también algunos otros que pronto ascenderían a cargos importantes, como el duque de Medinaceli, los condes de Chinchón y Olivares, los frailes Bernardo de Fresneda y Bartolomé de Carranza, y los secretarios Pedro de Hoyo y Gabriel de Zayas. Sin embargo, fueron pocos los que disfrutaron de la experiencia. «Aunque estamos en buena tierra, estamos entre la más mala gente de nación que hay en el mundo», escribió Muñoz, que añadía: «Son estos ingleses muy enemigos de la nación española».[98]

¿Qué pensaba Felipe de su nueva esposa? «La reina es muy buena cosa», le confió Ruy Gómez a Eraso el día después de la boda, «aunque más vieja de lo que nos decían». Un poco más avanzada esa semana, la actitud de Ruy Gómez se endureció. Aunque Felipe «no se pierde nada de su parte de lo que se debe hacer», escribió a Eraso, «para hablar verdad con vuestra merced, mucho Dios es menester para tragar este cáliz». De hecho, concluía con crudeza, todo el mundo «entiende que no por la carne se hizo este casamiento, sino por el remedio deste reino y conservación destos estados». La opinión española se hizo aún más acerada tras la muerte de María. En 1559, cuando

Felipe volvió a contraer matrimonio de nuevo, un ministro escribió que esta vez, con la joven Isabel de Valois, «no se quexará Su Majestad de que le hayan casado con muger fea y vieja».[99]

Sin embargo, los galenos de María pronto corroboraron que la reina estaba embarazada. En octubre, en una carta escrita a su cuñado Maximiliano, Felipe excusaba el hecho de que María «no escrive, porque no la dexa tener alguna sospecha de preñez»; al mes siguiente, la propia reina decía sentir cómo el niño «iba creciendo»; y, en diciembre, informaba a Carlos de que «en lo que respecta a lo que llevo en mi vientre, yo declaro que está vivo».[100] La pareja se trasladó al palacio de Hampton Court, «donde se tenía previsto que la reina diera a luz», y allí se procuraron comadronas, una cuna «muy lujosa y bellamente adornada» y una posible ama de cría. Entre tanto, los empleados de la cancillería estuvieron preparando múltiples documentos en los que se anunciaba el nacimiento, dejando solo en blanco los espacios reservados para inscribir la fecha y el sexo del infante.[101]

Aunque María experimentaba muchos de los síntomas asociados con un embarazo —hinchazón de abdomen y pechos, secreción de leche—, nunca parió y la corte abandonó Hampton Court. Carlos insistía de nuevo en que su hijo regresara con él y, a finales de agosto, Felipe embarcó en el navío que le esperaba cerca del palacio de Greenwich. Mientras Felipe «estaba a pie en alto de su barco, y ondeaba su gorra para saludar a la reina y mostrar su afecto», su desconsolada esposa permanecía en una ventana a la vista de todo el mundo, llorando profusamente. Los reyes cambiaron cartas «no solo cada día sino cada hora» hasta el 3 de septiembre, cuando Felipe cruzaba el canal de la Mancha.[102]

El nuevo rey continuó prestando «ayuda» a su esposa en el

gobierno de sus reinos. Dos días después de la boda, el Consejo de Estado de María sorteaba las restricciones impuestas por el tratado matrimonial y despejaba el camino para la intervención de su nuevo monarca.

> El Consejo ordenó que desde entonces debiera redactarse una nota, en latín o en español, sobre todos los asuntos de Estado que tuvieran que aprobarse de allí en adelante, y que la misma debía entregarse a quien su alteza el rey tuviera a bien designar para recibirla. Se ordenó también que todos los asuntos de Estado aprobados en nombre del rey y de la reina debieran ir firmados por ambos.[103]

Esto significaba que Felipe, a pesar de no hablar ni entender inglés, podía desempeñar un papel activo en los asuntos ingleses, y su intervención directa no cesó cuando se trasladó a los Países Bajos. Por un lado, el rey comunicaba sus órdenes por cartas escritas en latín y español dirigidas a María y a su confidente principal, el cardenal Reginald Pole. Tres días después de la despedida llorosa de los reyes, Pole informó a Felipe de que María «encontró gran placer en escribir a Su Majestad y recibir sus cartas» y en «llevar a cabo los asuntos públicos que el rey le había mandado hacer, porque la mantuvieron ocupada». Dos semanas después, Pole observó que ella «pasa las mañanas en oración, como María, y en las tardes sigue admirablemente el ejemplo de Marta despachando asuntos, instando a sus consejeros para que ellos estén ocupados constantemente… para seguir el curso indicado» por Felipe.[104] Por otro lado, desde Bruselas el rey también indicaba el «curso» deseado con órdenes a un nuevo órgano administrativo —un «escogido consejo» de ministros ingleses— formado poco antes de su partida. Este consejo se reunía varias veces a la semana para discutir asuntos relativos a la política interior y exterior y, al final de cada reunión, enviaba a Felipe una consulta en latín con sus recomendaciones para que este las comentara. Felipe también intervino en la política inglesa mediante el nombramiento de cargos del Estado, algunas veces con el asesoramiento de los clérigos españoles que le acompañaron en

su viaje, especialmente un carismático dominico a quien había conocido en el Concilio de Trento, Bartolomé de Carranza. Así, a la muerte del canciller de Inglaterra —el ministro de mayor categoría—, Carranza propuso el nombramiento del devoto arzobispo de York, y el propio Felipe «scrivió a la reina nuestra señora, que haya sancta gloria, diese el dicho oficio al dicho arzobispo, y así se le dio».[105] [⇒]

Felipe también se interesaba por las cosas de la fe. Según Bartolomé de Carranza, «en el reino de Inglaterra hizo él encarcelar e quemar más de 450» protestantes entre febrero de 1555 y noviembre de 1558, y por lo menos seiscientos más huyeron al extranjero. Un historiador católico moderno considera que Felipe y María dirigieron «la persecución religiosa más intensa acontecida en toda Europa en el siglo XVI».[106] El Consejo Real (que no solo supervisó el programa de persecución, sino que también interrogó a algunos reos) siempre envió al rey consultas que resumían sus deliberaciones. Casi la mitad de las ejecuciones acontecieron en Londres; así que Felipe podía vigilar personalmente el proceso mientras estaba en Inglaterra y, durante sus ausencias, el cardenal Pole incluía en sus cartas al rey informes puntuales sobre la persecución. Tenemos también el testimonio de un caso de herejía en el que Felipe intervino abiertamente. El Domingo de Resurrección de 1555, William Flower, un monje secularizado ahora casado, apuñaló a un fraile dominico mientras este celebraba misa. Indignado ante tamaño sacrilegio, Carranza instó a Felipe a

> que en semejantes casos mostrase Su Magestad quién era y que mandase con la reina, nuestra señora, se hiciese luego una justicia ejemplar; que era así necesario, porque sola la dilación hacia escándalo grande. Lo cual Su Magestad prometió de hacer [a Carranza] y se hizo así dentro de tres días, cortándole la mano derecha con que cometió el delito… y quemándole después vivo.

El rey no tuvo remordimientos. Más tarde, comentó con satisfacción que, durante su estancia en Inglaterra, «se relaxaron

muchas personas y otras se reduxeron», es decir, unas fueron entregadas a los tribunales seculares para su ejecución, pues la Inquisición no podía aplicar la pena de muerte, mientras que otras fueron «reducidas» por distintos medios, incluida la tortura, para que renunciaran a la herejía y abrazasen la fe verdadera. Entre los relajados estaba Thomas Cranmer, quien, como arzobispo de Canterbury, había autorizado el divorcio de Enrique VIII de Catalina de Aragón, la madre de María. Este celo de Felipe impresionó incluso a Carlos, quien anunció a bombo y platillo el crucial papel desempeñado por su hijo en la supresión de la herejía, escribiendo en mayo de 1558 que «en Inglaterra se han hecho y hacen tantas y tan crudas justicias, hasta obispos, por la orden que allí ha dado [Felipe], como si fuere su rey natural».[107]

Por supuesto, mientras estuvo en Inglaterra, Felipe también pasó gran parte de su tiempo administrando sus otros territorios. No dejó de enviar órdenes y cartas a su hermana Juana y a los consejeros de esta en España, comentando luego sus respuestas con los españoles de su séquito; y creó una junta especial (que más tarde se convertiría en el Consejo de Italia) para tratar los asuntos de los territorios italianos que le había cedido su padre. El rey príncipe también se interesaba por el tratamiento de los indios: reunió una junta de teólogos para discutir la legalidad de los «repartimientos» perpetuos y, según su propio informe, «paresce que la mayor parte de los unos y los otros concurren en que se deve e puede hazer lo del dicho repartimiento» y que «ningún otro remedio ay para la conservación e pacificación de aquellas tierras». Por tanto, informó a su padre de que «por todas estas causas e otras, estoy determinado en ello para que se ponga en ejecución». Pero Carlos se mantenía firme —«Yo nunca he estado bien en esto, como sabe, y lo he querido siempre escusar»— y deseaba que Felipe esperase a ser soberano de Castilla y sus colonias, pues

entonces «lo podrá hazer a su voluntad y como cosa suya, y firmar los despachos, y a mí me quitará deste escrúpulo».[108]

La transmisión del poder

Mientras tanto, en mayo de 1555 Gian Pietro Caraffa, un declarado enemigo de Carlos y Felipe, era elegido papa —tras la muerte de Julio III y de su efímero sucesor, Marcelo II— con el nombre de Paulo IV. El nuevo pontífice planeó inmediatamente un ataque coordinado protagonizado por Francia con la ayuda de la flota otomana y varios Estados italianos hostiles. Esto obligó a Felipe a tomar dos medidas preventivas. Con la esperanza de conseguir el apoyo de sus parientes austriacos, renunció formalmente a todas sus reivindicaciones sobre el título imperial presentadas cuatro años antes en Augsburgo *(véase capítulo 2)*; y salió de Inglaterra para Bruselas con el propósito de tomar las riendas del poder.

Los esfuerzos de Carlos por defender los Países Bajos le habían dejado exhausto y, en cuanto los franceses se retiraron a finales de 1554, se recluyó en una pequeña casa de campo cerca de Bruselas con un reducido grupo de criados y se negó a ver a nadie. Un esbozo de la cara del emperador correspondiente a esta época le muestra como un hombre físicamente arruinado, desdentado y calvo, cuyos ojos hundidos tienen la mirada perdida en la distancia. Tan solo tenía 55 años de edad [véase lámina 8]. El 25 de octubre de 1555, Carlos entró con paso lento en la gran sala de su palacio de Bruselas, apoyándose por un lado en un bastón y por el otro sobre el hombro del príncipe de Orange. Su hermana María y su hijo Felipe le seguían.

Después del discurso en el que un consejero explicaba las razones del emperador para querer abdicar y retirarse a España, Carlos se levantó lentamente, «se puso las gafas y leyó lo que estaba escrito en un papel». Entonces pronunció un elocuente y emotivo discurso en el que recordaba a su audiencia todas las

empresas que él había acometido en su nombre e instó a todo el mundo a mantener la fe católica como única religión.[109] Al terminar, Felipe se arrodilló ante su padre y le suplicó (en español) que se quedara y gobernara un poco más de tiempo, para que él pudiera «aprender de él, a través de la experiencia, aquellas cualidades que son más necesarias al gobierno». Luego, se sentó de nuevo y, volviéndose hacia la asamblea, pronunció las únicas palabras en francés de las que tenemos noticia: «Señores, aunque puedo entender el francés correctamente, no lo hablo con la fluidez suficiente para dirigirme a ustedes. De modo que sabrán por el obispo de Arras [Antonio Perrenot de Granvela] lo que quiero decirles». Al igual que en el caso de Inglaterra, la incapacidad de Felipe de hablar las lenguas de sus súbditos —y su decisión de permanecer sentado mientras se dirigía a ellos en lugar de estar de pie, como exigía el protocolo borgoñón— causó decepción. Pero Granvela pronunció palabras suaves, asegurando a los presentes que Felipe permanecería en el norte de Europa todo el tiempo que fuera necesario para garantizar su paz y prosperidad, y que regresaría siempre que hiciera falta, una sabia promesa que el rey no cumpliría.[110]

A pesar de toda la pompa y la emoción, la ceremonia de Bruselas se limitó a marcar la transferencia de los territorios y títulos de Carlos en los Países Bajos. Su intención era viajar enseguida a España y ceder allí sus derechos sobre Castilla, Aragón, Cerdeña, Sicilia y América; pero la falta de dinero para saldar cuentas con el personal de su casa y reunir una flota lo hizo imposible. En enero de 1556, mientras todavía se encontraba en Bruselas, Carlos transmitió sus reinos meridionales, junto con el título de «rey católico», a su hijo, en adelante llamado Felipe II. A petición de su hermano, Carlos también redactó y firmó una renuncia secreta a su título imperial, dejando a Fernando el determinar un momento

favorable para convocar una reunión del Colegio Electoral en la que se eligiera a su sucesor. Entre tanto, Carlos nombró a su hijo vicario (lugarteniente) imperial en Italia.

Hasta el momento en que firmó cada una de estas solemnes transferencias, Carlos continuó emitiendo órdenes y haciendo nombramientos. Por ejemplo, tres días antes de la ceremonia de abdicación en Bruselas, Carlos realizó maliciosamente una gran cantidad de nombramientos irrevocables de cargos eclesiásticos, militares y civiles en los Países Bajos, privando a su hijo de la capacidad de promocionar a sus propios colaboradores. Al parecer, padre e hijo conferenciaron debidamente sobre un único asunto: quién sucedería a María de Hungría como regente de los Países Bajos. Aunque estuvieron de acuerdo en que fuese Manuel Filiberto, duque de Saboya y primo del nuevo rey, la creación de una tercera instancia de poder mientras Carlos y Felipe aún permanecían allí no hizo más que aumentar la confusión sobre quién estaba al mando.

Por aquellos días, el duque de Alba, encargado de defender la Italia española contra las tropas francesas y papales, observó sin rodeos que «es menester dinero o paz, cualquiera, o acabarse todo. De estas tres cosas es fuerza que Su Majestad elija, que la una forzosamente ha de ser».[111] En febrero de 1556, al carecer de dinero suficiente para continuar con la lucha, Felipe se tragó su orgullo y firmó una tregua con Francia. Dado que cada bando continuaba en posesión de sus conquistas, nadie esperaba que la tregua durara mucho, por lo cual Felipe decidió permanecer en Bruselas. Su padre, en cambio, se embarcó para España, donde Felipe esperaba que adoptase un papel activo tanto en el gobierno como en la educación de su nieto y tocayo, don Carlos. En su lugar, el emperador se encaminó a su modesto aposento anexo al monasterio de los Jerónimos en Yuste, donde se mantuvo a distancia incluso de su propia familia (ni siquiera su hija Juana obtuvo permiso para visitarle)

y se negó completamente a comentar asuntos públicos. Pero por mucho que el emperador quisiera ignorar el mundo, el mundo se negaba a ignorarle a él. En julio de 1556 Paulo IV excomulgó tanto a Carlos como a Felipe y puso sus tierras en interdicto. Felipe se quejó amargamente de que las acciones del papa fueran

> tan sin propósito, razón y fundamento, como todo el mundo ha visto, pues yo no solamente no le había dado causa para ello, antes le tenía Su Santidad para me hacer favores y gracias por lo que he procurado de servirle y reverenciarle a él y aquella Santa Sede, así en la reducción de Inglaterra como en cuanto más he podido.[112]

Felipe no solo se quejó: también contraatacó. En primer lugar, ordenó a su hermana Juana que convocara una junta especial de «letrados, theólogos y juristas» españoles que le aconsejaran sobre cuál era la mejor respuesta a la declaración de guerra del papa. Esta junta propuso una solución radical: «Hazer en España un concilio nacional para reformar las cosas eclesiásticas». De hecho, sugería la junta, «no solo havrá de ser en España pero en todos los estados de Vuestra Alteza y de sus aliados», en otras palabras, en la mitad del mundo católico.[113]

Pese a la firmeza de esta cédula, la carga que suponía luchar simultáneamente contra el papa, Francia, los turcos y algunos Estados italianos parece que hizo flaquear la confianza de Felipe, quien envió a Ruy Gómez para persuadir a Carlos de que abandonara Yuste y se hiciera cargo del gobierno de España una vez más.

> Suplicando con toda humildad e ynstançia a Su Magestad tenga por bien de esfforçarse en esta coyuntura socorriéndome y ayudándome, no solo con su paresçer y consejo, que es el mayor caudal que puedo tener, pero con la presençia de su persona y auctoridad, saliendo del monasterio a la parte y lugar que más cómodo sea a su salud y a los negocios.

Además, ordenó a Ruy Gómez, «pediréys a Su Magestad me embie su paresçer cerca desto de la guerra, y por dónde y cómo devría acometer y emprender esta jornada para poder hazer effectos más sustanciales».[114]

El rey guerrero

Mientras esperaba impaciente la respuesta, Felipe se esforzó en que Inglaterra declarase la guerra a Francia. El tratado matrimonial con María prohibía expresamente al rey consorte implicar a sus nuevos súbditos en la guerra hasta entonces entablada entre Carlos y Francia, y, para vencer la oposición de los ministros de su esposa, en marzo de 1557 Felipe regresó a Inglaterra. En cuanto logró su fin, salió de nuevo hacia Bruselas para hacerse cargo de la guerra.

Aunque su gran destreza en torneos y justas, a caballo y a pie, demostraba que Felipe tenía la capacidad de adaptarse a la guerra, hasta entonces jamás había entrado en combate. Esperaba que la campaña de 1557 trajera un cambio. Desde el principio, mantuvo un estrecho control personal sobre la estrategia, las operaciones militares y la logística, y a finales de julio (todavía en Bruselas) notificó a su primo Manuel Filiberto de Saboya que «Nos avemos resuelto en que devéys partir el jueves y yros a poner sobre San Quintín». Añadió que «Passaré derecho a Cambray donde pienso ser el sábado. Yo seré sin falte en Cambray el sábado» —una curiosa repetición, ¿quizás una señal de incertitud?— «por dar priesa en todo, y espero que el lunes estará esta gente [inglesa] donde convenga». Desde allí, proseguía, «pienso estar con vos el martes», 3 de agosto.[115]

Tanta microgestión indicaba claramente que Felipe carecía de experiencia militar. Mientras que Manuel Filiberto fortificó «el campo con trincheras» alrededor de San Quintín, el rey con la artillería de asedio permanecía en Cambrai, cuarenta kilómetros al norte, esperando el contingente inglés de 7.000 soldados enviados por María. «Mucho me ha pesado de no ir oy como lo pensaba», escribía a su primo el 6 de agosto. Los ingleses todavía no habían llegado el día 9, por lo que Felipe, muy nervioso por la preocupación de que la batalla tuviera

lugar sin él, escribió a Manuel Filiberto:

> Si esto del pelear no se pudiese escusar hasta que yo fuese, que será sin falta quando aquí se dice, yo os encargo quanto puedo —pues veis que en ninguna cosa me puede ir más que en viendo que se encamina el negocio a este propósito — me aviséis bolando dello con tres o cuatro [mensajeros], cada uno por su parte, que hagan grandísima diligencia y a ser de manera y a tiempo que con la misma pueda yo llegar a tiempo. Y pues sé que no queréis dejar de tener my compañía en tal coyuntura, y viendo lo que me iría en ello, no os lo quiero encarezer más, aunque querría decíroslo muy largamente.[116]

No ocurriría así. Al día siguiente, 10 de agosto, fiesta de San Lorenzo, un ejército francés trató de socorrer San Quintín, pero Manuel Filiberto, apoyado por el conde de Egmont y otros nobles flamencos, dirigió un victorioso contraataque. Más de 5.000 soldados franceses cayeron en el combate y varios miles más fueron hechos prisioneros, incluidos numerosos nobles. Carranza, en aquel momento en Bruselas, se maravillaba de que «cada día llevan por aquí presos franceses» y «por todos estos castillos reparten duques y condes de Francia». Catorce años después, el conde de Feria todavía recordaba con satisfacción ese día, cuando «dimos con la casa de Francia patas arriba».[117]

La aplastante victoria llevó al rey a proyectar dos importantes monumentos conmemorativos. En primer lugar, encargó una magnífica vidriera en la iglesia de San Juan de Gouda, como también hicieron varios de los que habían comandado tropas en esta batalla [véase lámina 17]. Después, fundó un monasterio y mausoleo dedicado a san Lorenzo en El Escorial, porque «entendió que un principio tan ilustre de sus cosas le venía por su favor e intercesiones en el cielo».[118] Pero esto corresponde al futuro. De momento, Felipe entró en las trincheras que rodeaban San Quintín y se encargó personalmente de las operaciones de asedio. «Estubo Su Magestad a caballo y con un bastón en la mano» —escribió un testigo de vista—, tal como Antonio Moro le pintó [véase lámina 9].

El 26 de agosto, después de disparar la artillería «con gran furia» contra las murallas de la ciudad, «estuvo Su Magestad en esquadrón», listo para un asalto, pero se resolvió en «dilatar para ver si los [franceses] dentro, biendo llegar la cosa tan a punto, se rrendierran». Pero se negaron. Al día siguiente, tras otro ataque artillero, «se entró en [San Quintín] por todas partes matando toda la gente que a la primera furia e ímpetus pudo alcanzar», según el informe oficial que envió Felipe, orgulloso, a su tío Fernando. «Nuestro Señor por su bondad ha querido darme estas victorias en tan pocos días y a principios de mi reinado», alardeaba ante su hermana Juana, «de que se me sigue tanto honor y reputación».[119]

Entretanto, en Italia, el duque de Alba lograba también un éxito espectacular. Primero, expulsó a un ejército francés cerca de Nápoles y, a continuación, avanzó hacia Roma. El 28 de agosto de 1557, mientras Felipe tomaba y saqueaba San Quintín, la artillería española disparó sobre los muros de Roma y las tropas de Alba esperaban poder realizar «un saquillo a la ligera». Pero el duque se contuvo, «porque la irrupción le fue prohibida por una orden del rey, […] ordenándole que no causara daño sino solo temor». Dos semanas más tarde, Paulo IV firmó un ignominioso compromiso de que nunca volvería a declarar la guerra al rey de España ni a ayudar a quienes lo hicieran y que no construiría más fortificaciones. La rendición del papa puso toda Italia en manos de Felipe: las tropas francesas se retiraron hacia al norte y los temerarios aliados italianos de Paulo se apresuraron a firmar la paz con los victoriosos españoles.[120]

Sin embargo, estas victorias resultaron costosas. En mayo de 1557, aun antes de la campaña, Felipe había autorizado un decreto de suspensión, la primera bancarrota pública española, convirtiendo por la fuerza el capital y los intereses de todos los asientos a corto plazo pendientes, cuyo pago estaba asignado a

sus ingresos procedentes de Castilla, a juros marcados a un interés fijo del 7,14 %. Durante más de un mes, la princesa Juana se negó a publicar el decreto, basándose en que este le impediría conseguir futuros asientos, lo cual dio tiempo al rey para conseguir otros nuevos eximiendo del decreto a los banqueros que le facilitasen dinero. Felipe también le suplicó a su padre, «con la mayor instancia que puedo, que tenga la mano para que me provean de dinero». Esta vez, tras pasar casi un año recluido en Yuste, Carlos le complació, dictando y firmando una serie de enérgicas cartas a sus anteriores ministros en las que les instaba a cumplir de inmediato las peticiones de dinero de su hijo.[121]

Felipe continuaba con sus tropas en Francia mientras estas saqueaban varios pequeños lugares hasta que, a mediados de octubre, regresó a Bruselas, donde pidió a los Estados Generales de los Países Bajos dinero para su ejército. Pero no lo logró. Se lamentó a Manuel Filiberto de que «el exército se viniesse a despedir en fin deste mes porque hasta allí se hizo la quenta del dinero. Ha crescido, ha montado más de lo que se pensó. No veo forma de poderlo proveer».[122] Entre tanto, Enrique II mandó que las tropas francesas se retiraran de la península italiana.

Lejos, en Yuste, los peligros inherentes a estos dos acontecimientos llamaron la atención del experimentado ojo del emperador. «Hallándoos desarmado», advertía a su hijo, «podría ser que juntando el enemigo su campo, quisiesse este inuierno intentar de querer recuperar alguna de las plaças que ha perdido, o ganar otros de nueuo». Por tanto, aconsejó a Felipe que mantuviera un contingente numeroso en los alrededores de Metz; así, «teniendo vos aquella gente, podríades más seguramente allegaros al enemigo y contrastarle para estoruarle que no hiciese lo que podría pretender». Esto, concluía el emperador, no solo fortalecería a las propias tropas

de Felipe, sino que también le permitiría «con seguridad soccorrer a los amigos», una velada referencia a la necesidad de proteger Calais. ¡Pero Felipe nunca leyó la carta! Como si hubiese decidido que no tenía tiempo para las siempre ampulosas y algo egocéntricas misivas de su padre, solo leía los resúmenes que le preparaba su secretario, Francisco de Eraso. «No hay que responder», anotó Eraso en esa ocasión, y, aunque estaba preparando «los puntos y negocios que el emperador scrive a Vuestra Magestad» en varias cartas más, omitió completamente las preocupaciones estratégicas de Carlos recogidas en esa última.[123]

Era un descuido importante, porque los acontecimientos no tardarían en justificar la advertencia del emperador. El 31 de diciembre de 1557, unos 30.000 soldados franceses invadieron el enclave inglés en torno a Calais (unos 250 kilómetros cuadrados). En Bruselas, Felipe reconoció el peligro e invitaba al comandante inglés a que «si necesita algo de nosotros para mayor seguridad y defensa», lo pidiera, «porque lo haremos de buena gana». Los franceses tomaron toda la zona en tres semanas.[124]

La pérdida de Calais transformó la situación estratégica. A los españoles «nos ha puesto en gran confusión, porque quando pensávamos que las guerras eran acavadas, parece que comiençan agora de nuevo». En Inglaterra, la «confusión» fue aún mayor. Cuatro años antes, Carlos había asegurado a María Tudor que su casamiento con Felipe le permitiría «recuperar Guyenne, injustamente en manos de quienes ahora la poseen, y puede que incluso el reino de Francia»; pero, en cambio, le había acarreado la pérdida de su última posesión continental.[125] La reina quedó destrozada y, según una historia que se hizo muy popular, llegó a afirmar que, cuando muriera, «la palabra "Calais" aparecería grabada sobre mi corazón». El único consuelo que le quedaba a María en esos momentos era su

nuevo embarazo.

Pole informó a Felipe del estado de la reina en enero de 1558, y este respondió que había recibido «muy mayor alegría y contentamiento de lo que aquí podría encarecer, por ser la cosa del mundo que más he desseado, y importar tanto al bien de la religión y de nuestros reinos». Tan segura estaba María de su feliz desenlace que, el 30 de marzo, pasados ya nueve meses de la partida de su esposo, «previendo el gran peligro que por voluntad de Dios corren todas las mujeres en los trabajos del parto», hizo un nuevo testamento según el cual nombraba a Felipe regente «durante la minoría de edad de mi heredero y descendiente». También ordenó a su flota mantenerse a la espera en Dover e «[hizo] aderezar el aposento desde aquí al puerto» por si su «gentil príncipe de España» volvía. El conde de Feria, el representante personal de Felipe ante la reina, advertía a su amo de que «todo su negocio es que Vuestra Magestad venga»[126].

Felipe se mostraba de acuerdo: la clave para el futuro estaba en si María, a sus cuarenta y dos años de edad, estaba embarazada o no. En febrero de 1558 Felipe anotaba que «la reyna no me escrive nada del preñado y téngolo por mala señal». Un mes después, escribía a Feria que «en el parto de la reyna, será lo más seguro creer hombre lo que viere y no confiar mucho hasta entonces». Y, en abril, lo daba por imposible: «Ya me parece que tardaría mucho la nueba del parto de la reyna, y así creo que podemos estar desatinados dello». Este pensamiento dejaba a Felipe desanimado, tanto que (escribía a Feria) «en este tienpo soy enemygo de ablar y de [e]scrivir y aún con qualquiera, y así no quiero decir más».[127]

Aunque pocas personas creyeran que María estaba embarazada, la esperanza de que su marido regresara era razonable, pues los correos viajaban regularmente entre Bruselas

y Londres en cuatro días y en 1555 el propio Felipe cruzó el canal de la Mancha en dos horas y media. Sin embargo, nunca ocurrió porque el rey cayó enfermo poco después de recibir la grata noticia. En febrero de 1558 lamentó que «aun agora no puedo comer bocado y he tenido gran suma de reuma en el pescuezo y en los agallos»; además, «me ha caído todo al pecho que me ahoga y no me deja dormir de noche». Feria tuvo que contarle todo eso a la reina para explicarle por qué su marido no podía visitarla. A la semana siguiente, Felipe le transmitía otras quejas: «El pecho no me acaba de dejar, y quedo de manera que hasta oy no me he atrevido» a salir de palacio. Y, continuó, cuando un día «he ido a estar un rato» a caballo, «ube menester descansar dos o tres vezes a la ida y otras tantas a la buelta». ¡Pobrecito rey! En marzo de 1558, su salud mejoró lo suficiente para volver a salir de caza, y anunció a María que podría visitarla; pero luego llegaron noticias de que los franceses estaban preparando otra invasión, lo cual significaba que Felipe no podía salir de Flandes «aunque no fuese sino por poco tiempo, aunque yo querría que fuese por mucho».[128]

En una carta fechada el 1 de mayo de 1558, Feria advirtió a su amo de que hasta María había aceptado finalmente que no estaba embarazada. «Duerme muy mal y anda flaca, y con sus melancolias y estas indispusiciones», así que era imprescindible «ablar y escrivir» a su esposa sobre reconocer a su hermanastra Isabel Tudor como posible heredera. Felipe cumplió: «Yo escrivo a la reyna», aseguró a Feria, «alabando cómo se gouernó Isabel», tras lo cual añadió: «Le digo que mire que si agora faltase, me dexaria aquel reyno enemygo».[129] Para evitar esto, Felipe decidió realizar una visita relámpago a Inglaterra, pero en el último momento, como aconteció en marzo, tuvo que abandonar su plan porque los franceses lanzaron un ataque sorpresa. Con esto Felipe acababa de perder su última oportunidad no solo de ver a su esposa, sino de poner a Isabel a

su favor, ya que, de haber conseguido persuadir a María para que reconociera los derechos de su hermanastra entonces, habría aumentado muy considerablemente su propia influencia sobre la próxima reina de Inglaterra.

Entre tanto, un ejército francés invadía Flandes y conquistaba varios puertos hasta que, el 13 de julio de 1558, Egmont transformó la situación con una emboscada a los invasores a las afueras de Gravelinas (Grevelingen), donde consiguió matar o capturar a la mayoría de ellos. Dos semanas después, Felipe («que estava muy contento») visitó a su ejército, felicitó a Egmont, y durante los dos meses siguientes se mantuvo cerca de sus tropas mientras estas invadían Francia de nuevo. Aunque esta vez no participó en persona en las operaciones militares, tarea que dejó a Manuel Filiberto de Saboya, sí mantuvo reuniones periódicas para decidir la estrategia. En ocasiones Felipe mandaba llamar a Saboya para que le informara de la situación en persona, «porque de palabra mejor se entiende esto que no por escrito»; otras veces iba él al cuartel general del duque y escuchaba mientras sus generales y ministros debatían las diversas opciones. Por fin, en septiembre de 1558, cuando la temporada de campaña estaba a punto de terminar, Felipe convocó a sus principales asesores holandeses, italianos y españoles: todos apoyaron la postura de Granvela, que consistía en pactar una tregua que dejaba al ejército de Felipe el control de Francia al norte del río Somme y aprovechar el invierno para negociar un acuerdo duradero.[130]

Al principio, este «acuerdo duradero» parecía imposible: los franceses querían Nápoles y Milán; los ingleses insistían en la devolución de Calais; el duque de Saboya deseaba recuperar todas sus tierras; y Felipe demandaba Borgoña y la Picardía. Los franceses pensaban que la forma más eficaz de resolver todas las disputas con Felipe era que su hijo, don Carlos, se casara con Isabel de Francia, hija mayor de Enrique II, pero insistían en

que primero había que solucionar las cuestiones pendientes con Inglaterra. Felipe propuso, generoso, «que en lo del dote, se pidiese a Calés» —esto es, que la dote de Isabel de Francia sería Calais—, pero los ingleses lo rechazaron coléricamente, al interpretarlo como un cuestionamiento de su soberanía en la zona. Esta situación de punto muerto finalizó al llegar la noticia de la muerte de María Tudor, ocurrida el 17 de noviembre de 1558.[131]

Adiós al trono de Inglaterra

Los rumores relativos a la mala salud de la reina llevaban algún tiempo circulando y, por tanto, Felipe continuaba sus reflexiones sobre cómo conservar el catolicismo en Inglaterra en caso de que María muriera. En octubre de 1558, cuando se enteraba de que la reina estaba «no sin peligro de la vida», Felipe mandó a Feria «estar con Madama Isabel, y seruilla como a hermana de vuestra magestad, y a encaminar que ella uiniesse a la corona sin desassossiego». Era demasiado tarde: sus consejeros ya habían convencido a María de «declarar que la reina estaba muy contenta de que ella [Isabel] le sucediera». María murió una semana más tarde y el título de Felipe como «rey de Inglaterra, Irlanda y Francia» desapareció con ella.[132]

Felipe había conseguido mucho en Inglaterra, especialmente en el campo de la religión. En octubre de 1554, un español recién llegado escribió que «los frailes que aquí pasaron [de España] sienpre están recogidos que no salen de un colegio que a dezir misa. No se atreuen salir si no ban con ellos muchos españoles porque los apedrean y así agora an acordado de dezir misa en su posada». ¡Qué contraste con la situación cinco años más tarde, cuando hasta los protestantes tuvieron que admitir el éxito obtenido por ellos!

> Nuestras universidades están tan deterioradas y echadas a perder que en Oxford apenas quedan dos personas que compartan nuestras ideas, e incluso ellas están tan abatidas y desmoralizadas que no pueden hacer nada… [Algunos]

despreciables frailes han convertido la viña del Señor en un erial. Resulta difícil de creer cuánta desolación puede causarse en tan corto plazo de tiempo.[133]

Isabel se vería obligada a destituir a los directores de casi todos los colegios de Oxford, y también a prácticamente todos los obispos y a dos tercios de los deanes y oficiales porque insistían en permanecer leales al papa.

Como escribió el historiador Eamon Duffy, «solo la muerte de la reina [María] —y no cualquier impresión de fracaso, pérdida de dirección o falta de determinación— acabó» con la Inglaterra católica de Felipe y María. Todo apunta a que, incluso sin hijos de su matrimonio, el catolicismo se habría instaurado perdurablemente en Inglaterra si la reina hubiera vivido hasta los cincuenta y seis años como su padre, Enrique VIII, o incluso hasta los cincuenta y dos como su abuelo Enrique VII, por no decir los setenta que viviría su hermanastra Isabel (quien también falleció sin descendencia). En cambio, María murió a la edad de cuarenta y dos años.[134]

No era la única muerte de un pariente sufrida por Felipe en esa época. El 1 de noviembre de 1558, se había enterado del fallecimiento de su padre en Yuste seis semanas antes. La noticia le dejó consternado, e inmediatamente decidió retirarse a un convento en Bruselas para llorar su muerte. Cuando Manuel Filiberto le visitó en ese convento para tratar de algún asunto urgente doce días más tarde, «[le] allé muy triste». Sus ánimos se hundieron más aún cuando, el 25 de noviembre, se enteró de que «la muerte de la reyna María [de Hungría, su tía] ha salido verdadera, y creo que saldrán todas las que me estubieren mal según soy dichoso». Así se quejaba a su hermana Juana:

Ya podéis juzgar cual debo quedar; que no paresce sino que todo me viene a faltar al mejor tiempo […]. Todos estos sucesos no pueden dejar de embarazarme, y darme mucho que pensar en el gobierno destos Estados [Países Bajos], y en lo que debo asentar en Inglaterra, en caso que viva o muera [María Tudor]; que son cosas muy grandes y principales, y de donde depende el

beneficio, quietud y alivio de mis Estados. Que de mi descanso no quiero tractar, que es lo menos para este propósito.[135]

Sus peores temores se hicieron realidad el 7 de diciembre, al recibir la noticia de las muertes, acaecidas tres semanas antes, no solo de María Tudor, sino también del cardenal Pole (quien falleció el mismo día que la reina). Según el confesor de Felipe, «Su Magestad está tan penado de las muertes de su padre y lo demás, que tanto le tocava, que no huelga que le vea tan presto», y se negaba a ocuparse de sus asuntos. El día 27, todavía desde la soledad de su celda, Felipe analizaba su sombría situación en una carta a Feria:

Yo me veo oy sin un real, y no en manera de hablar sino que no le tengo para ninguna cosa de quantas e menester, así que acá yo no me puedo sostener más. Tampoco puedo ir a España sin hazer paz, que no parecería bien; y sería desanimar mucho a éstos [estados], aunque de my presencia no ganarían sino perderme yo con ellos, y quizá más que ellos, porque ellos creo que se consolarán con qualquier dueño y gobierno.[136]

Desde que comenzó a gobernar, más de quince años antes, Felipe había ansiado independencia y respeto, y le parecía que nunca los había tenido. Como anotó indignado en el dorso de una de las autoritarias cartas de su tía María de Hungría dirigida a «Vuestra Alteza» en la primavera de 1558:

Por esta carta, veréis sabe la reyna decir bien su razón, y si deve de tener quien la aconseje lo que está mejor a ella, no mirando el respecto que se me debe de tener, pues no quiere respetarme ninguna superioridad; y yo no quiero que lo sea otro en mis reynos, sino Su Magestad [Carlos].[137]

Ahora que tanto María como Carlos estaban muertos, el deseo de Felipe se había hecho realidad: a partir de entonces, Felipito era libre de hacer lo que quisiera. Después de un aprendizaje de tantos años, ahora no solo había conseguido respeto, sino también autoridad. A veces firmaba órdenes «como Rey y Señor que no reconozco superior en lo temporal» y podía mandar a sus vasallos «de nuestro propio motu, cierta ciencia, y poderío real absoluto, de que en esta parte queremos usar y ussamos como rey y soberano señor, no recognosciente

en la tierra superior en lo temporal».[138] Además de respeto y poder, también poseía libertad absoluta en su vida personal. Era dueño de su calendario y de su horario: podía levantarse y acostarse cuando y donde le placía; ir y venir a su antojo; hablar y escuchar —o callar y recogerse— a su elección; y se rodeó, tal y como él quería, de bufones y «locos». Entonces, ¿cómo pasaría su tiempo en su nuevo oficio de «rey y soberano señor»?

La monarquía española en su apogeo, 1585. La anexión de Portugal y sus posesiones de ultramar convirtieron a Felipe II en el gobernante del primer imperio global de la historia. Aunque su núcleo se hallaba en la península ibérica, por la mesa de Felipe pasaba regularmente un aluvión de asuntos relativos

a Africa, Asia y América que le obligaban a tomar innumerables decisiones.

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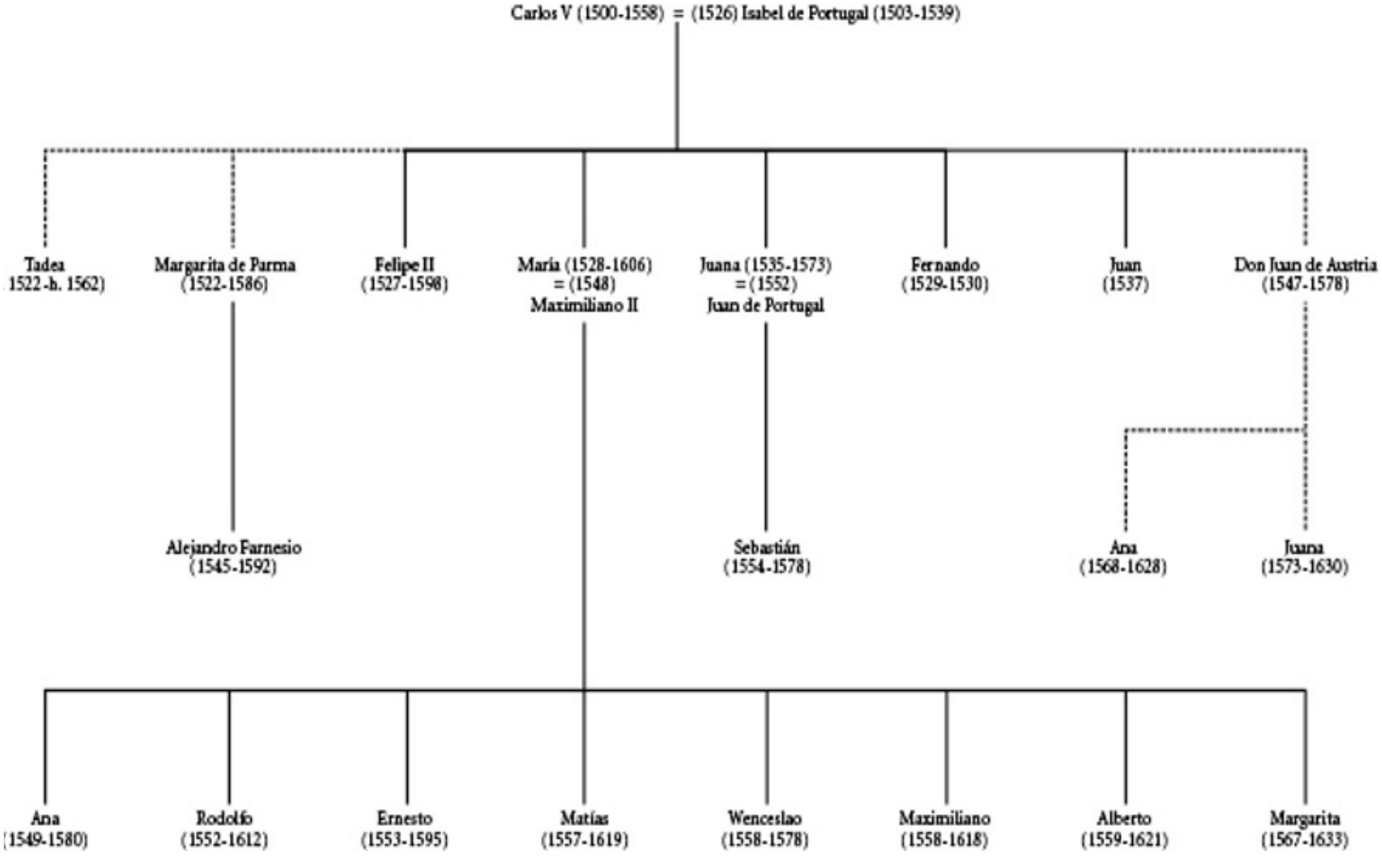
Carlos V (1500-1558) = (1526) Isabel de Portugal (1503-1539)
Tadea (1522-h. 1562)
Margarita de Parma (1522-1586)
Felipe II (1527-1598)
María (1528-1606) = (1548) Maximiliano II
Juana (1535-1573) = (1552) Juan de Portugal
Fernando (1529-1530)
Juan (1537)
Don Juan de Austria (1547-1578)
Alejandro Farnesio (1545-1592)
Sebastián (1554-1578)
Ana (1568-1628)
Juana (1573-1630)
Ana (1549-1580)
Rodolfo (1552-1612)
Ernesto (1553-1595)
Matías (1557-1619)
Wenceslao (1558-1578)
Maximiliano (1558-1618)
Alberto (1559-1621)
Margarita (1567-1633)

La familia de Carlos V. La Casa de Austria tendía a formar grandes familias o ninguna. María, hija de Carlos V, tuvo quince descendientes (en la ilustración, por razones de espacio, solo figuran ocho); de ellos, solo Ana tuvo hijos, uno de los cuales, el futuro Felipe III, sí engendró herederos. Los restantes contrajeron matrimonio demasiado tarde para reproducirse o bien no se casaron. (Las líneas discontinuas corresponden a hijos ilegítimos).

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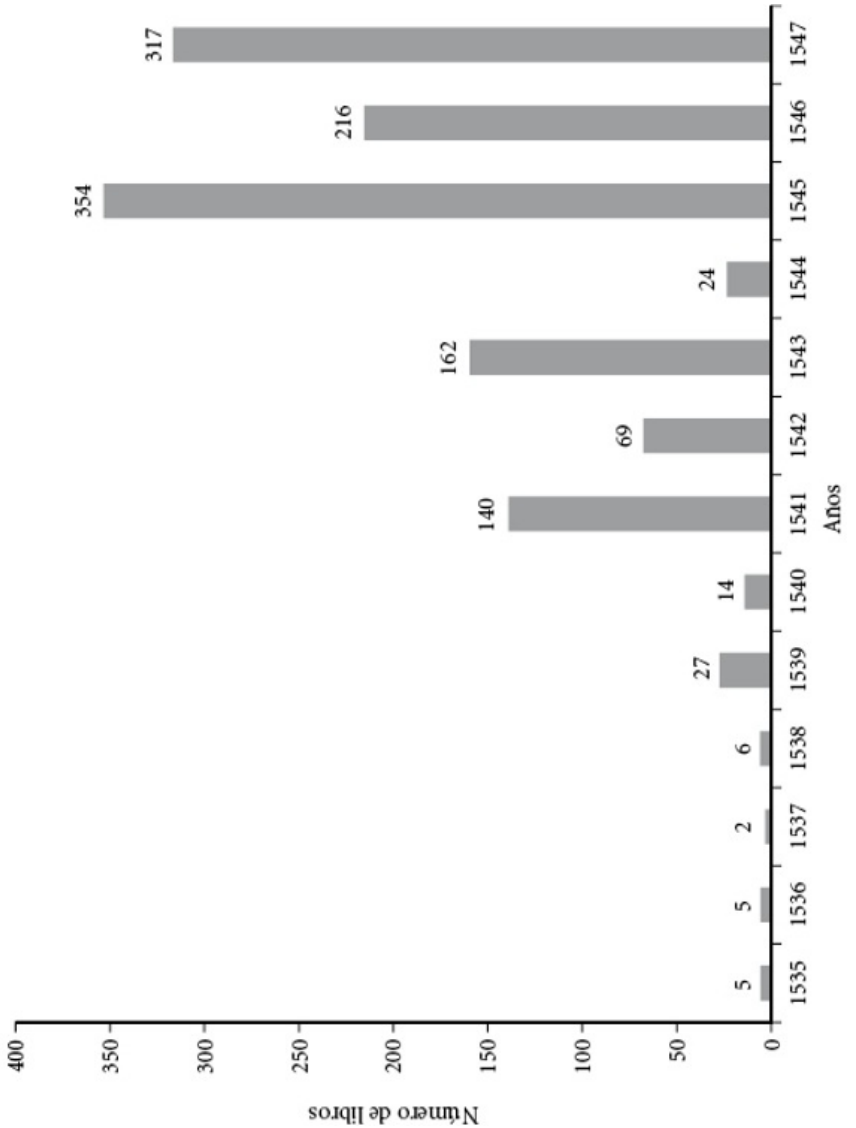

Libros adquiridos por Felipe II, 1535-1547. El tesorero de la Casa del Príncipe Felipe registró el título y la fecha de compra de cada libro adquirido por o para su amo, y el ritmo de las compras revela el impacto inmediato de la llegada de Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella como tutor del príncipe a finales de 1540.

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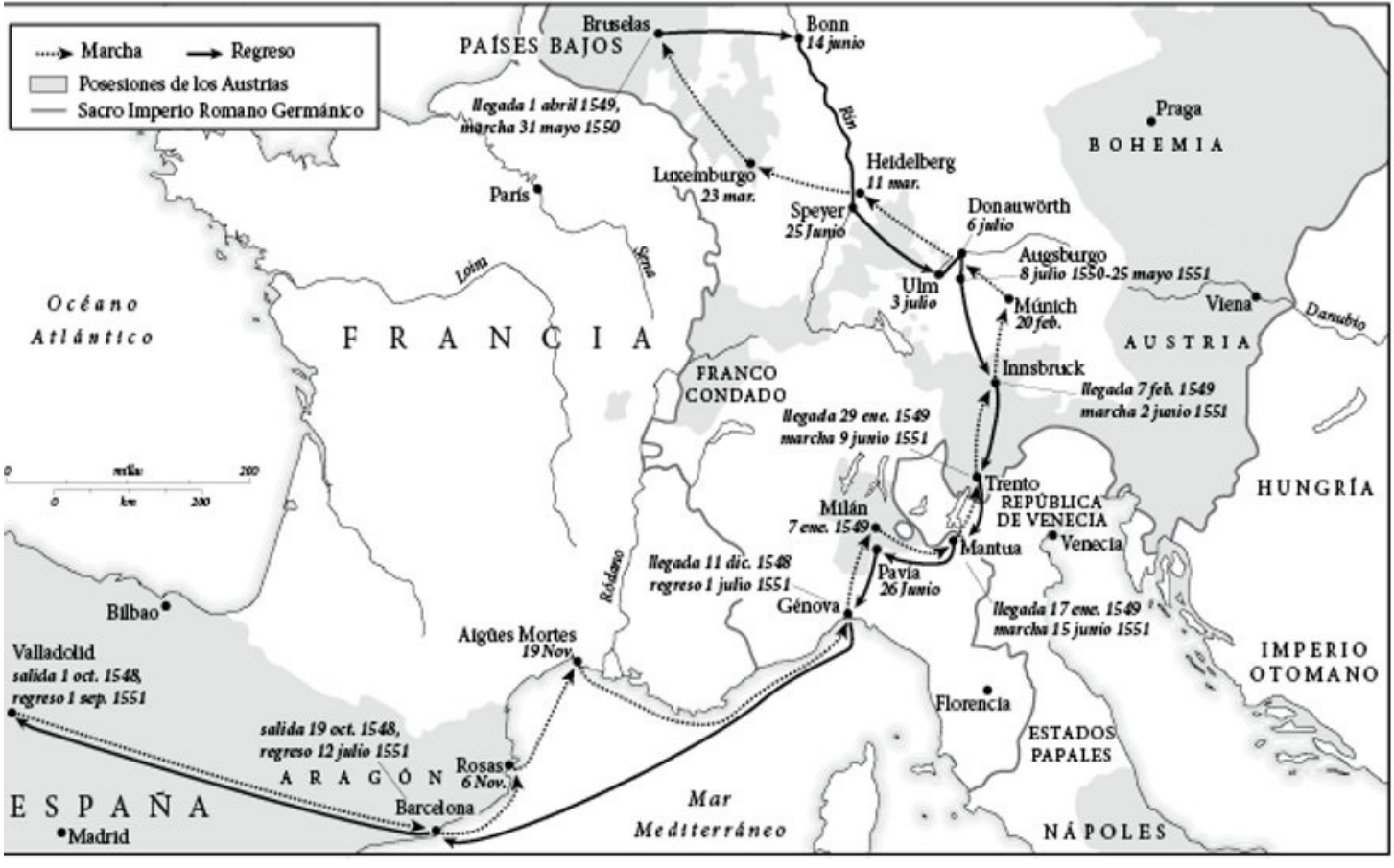
Marcha
Regreso
Posesiones de los Austrias
Sacro Imperio Romano Germánico
PAÍSES BAJOS
Bruselas
Bonn
14 junio
llegada 1 abril 1549,
marcha 31 mayo 1550
Luxemburgo
23 mar.
París
Heidelberg
11 mar.
Speyer
25 Junio
Donauwörth
6 julio
Augsburgo
8 julio 1550-25 mayo 1551
Ulm
3 julio
Múnich
20 feb.
Praga
BOHEMIA
Viena
Danubio
AUSTRIA
Océano
Atlántico
FRANCIA
Loira
Sena
FRANCO
CONDADO
Innsbruck
llegada 7 feb. 1549
marcha 2 junio 1551
llegada 29 ene. 1549
marcha 9 junio 1551
Trento
HUNGRÍA
Milán
7 ene. 1549
REPÚBLICA
DE VENECIA
Venecia
Mantua
Pavia
26 Junio
llegada 11 dic. 1548
regreso 1 julio 1551
Ródano
Génova
llegada 17 ene. 1549
marcha 15 junio 1551
Bilbao
Valladolid
salida 1 oct. 1548,
regreso 1 sep. 1551
Aigües Mortes
19 Nov.
IMPERIO
OTOMANO
Florencia
ESTADOS
PAPALES
salida 19 oct. 1548,
regreso 12 julio 1551
ARAGÓN
Rosas
6 Nov.
Barcelona
ESPAÑA
Madrid
Mar
Mediterráneo
NÁPOLES

Viaje de Felipe a los Países Bajos en 1548-1549 y regreso en 1550-1551. Carlos V firmó la orden para que su hijo se reuniese con él en diciembre de 1547, pero Felipe permaneció en España diez meses más. Cuando viajó, lo hizo sin prisas y por etapas, en galera hasta el norte de Italia, y desde allí, a través de los Alpes, hasta Austria y el sur de Alemania, con lo que no se reunió con su padre hasta abril de 1549. El príncipe pasó más de un año en los Países Bajos antes de acompañar a su padre a Augsburgo, donde residió diez meses antes de su regreso a España.

<<

Fronteras de los Países Bajos
Fronteras provinciales
Arzobispado de Lieja
Mar del Norte
Kampen
Zwolle
Haarlem
Ámsterdam
Zutphen
Amersfoort
La Haya
Utrecht
6 oct.
Arnhem
Nimega
Róterdam
Dordrecht
's Hertogenbosch
24 Sep.
Breda
Bergen
Roermond
22 oct.
Rin
Amberes
19 sep.
Brujas
26 julio
Gante
19 julio
Malinas
6 Sep.
Gravelinas
Lys
Escalda
12 julio
Bruselas 1 abr.
Ypres
Saint-Omer
Tournai
Soignies
Namur
Mosa
Lille
7 ago.
Mons
Binche
31 ago.
Arras
12 ago.
Douai
Marche
Cambrai
Avesnes
Bastogne
Luxemburgo
23 mar.
F R A N C I A
0 millas 50
0 km 50

Viaje de Felipe por los Países Bajos en 1549. El príncipe Felipe visitó las provincias meridionales de los Países Bajos con su padre Carlos V en julio y agosto de 1549, acompañado por cortesanos de todas partes de la monarquía de los Austrias, y en septiembre y octubre las provincias septentrionales le juraron lealtad como príncipe heredero.

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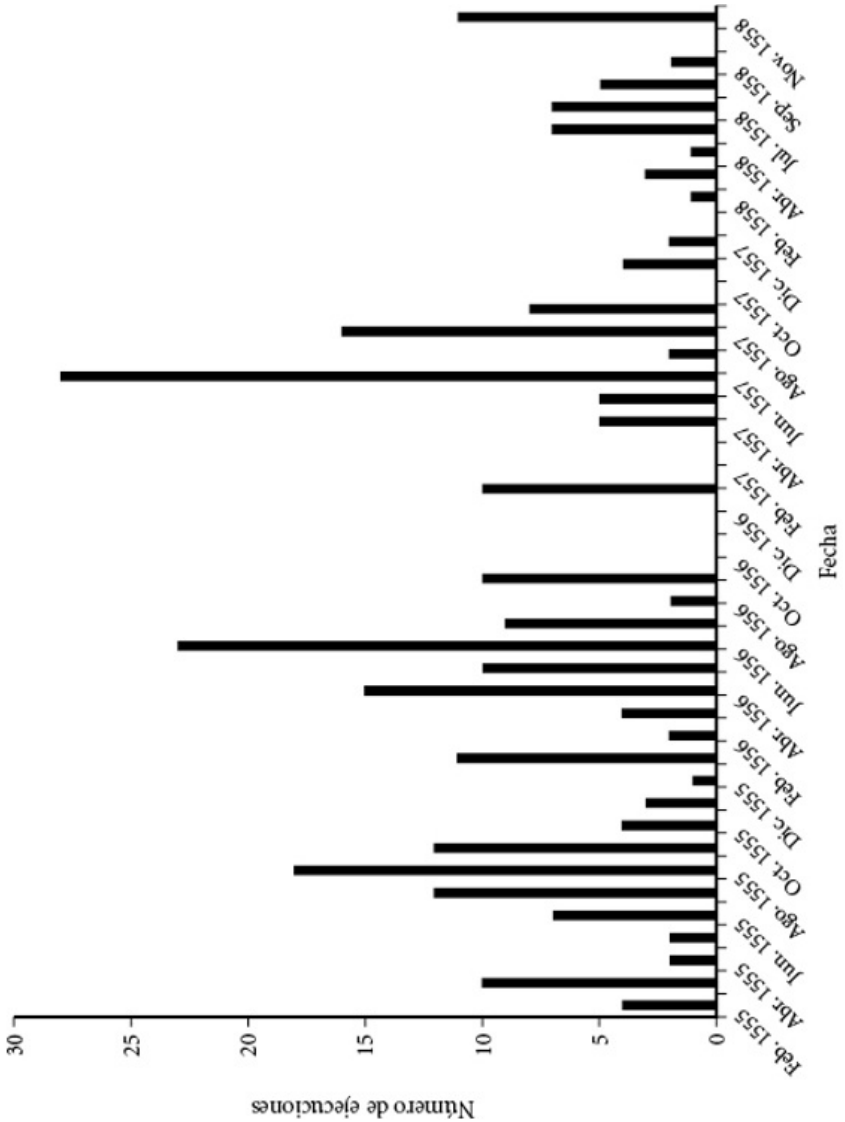

Ejecuciones de herejes en la hoguera en Inglaterra, 1555-1558. Como mínimo 284 protestantes (56 de ellos mujeres) fueron quemados por motivo de su fe a partir de febrero de 1555, mientras Felipe reinó en Inglaterra. Aunque, al parecer, la presencia del rey en el país no afectó a la frecuencia de las ejecuciones, el Consejo Privado supervisó esta política y envió copias de sus deliberaciones a Felipe, que así pudo estar al tanto del total, hasta su último mes como rey de Inglaterra.

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SEGUNDA PARTE

El rey y su mundo

4. La mesa de Felipe II[139]

«No se vio en el mundo hombre tan gran trabajador»

«Encuentro a este príncipe muy metido en sus asuntos y que no pierde una hora, estando todo el día entero sobre sus papeles»: tal era el veredicto del embajador francés sobre Felipe II en 1559. Quince años más tarde, su colega veneciano también quedaba impresionado: «El rey trabaja con tanta diligencia, sin tener recreación, que no hay oficial en el mundo, por diligente que sea, quien está tanto metido en su oficio que Su Magestad». Y en un sermón fúnebre por Felipe en 1598, un predicador real declaró: «No se vio en el mundo hombre tan gran trabajador: nunca tuuo hora ociosa, siempre sobre sus papeles, sobre sus consultas y negocios, por los bosques y por los jardines, cargado de papeles: escriviendo y despachando sin cesar».[140]

El mismísimo rey estaba de acuerdo y con frecuencia llamaba la atención de sus ministros sobre «cuán gran trabajador» era. En 1558, en una carta escrita cuando «ya son más de las XII», Felipe se quejaba de «que me han muerto con negocios los días y venir desto tan cansado las noches», así que «si se me holvidare algo, tendrá la culpa el sueño que tengo que he dado en madrugar, y caerme dormydo con el bocado en la boca». Siete años más tarde, otra vez se quejaba de que «a mý me traen de manera lo que carga de mý que no sé lo que me digo ni lo que me hago». No obstante, siguió trabajando en sus papeles hasta «la una, y me estoy durmiendo todo». Un día en 1577, cuando el rey levantó sus ojos de la mesa se encontró con que «son las 10, y estoy hecho en pedazos y muerto de hambre, y es día de ayuno. Y así quedará esto para mañana». El año 1578 transcurrió del mismo modo. En una ocasión, contestó a un secretario que «vino tan gran carga de papeles que con aver estado todo el día en ellos sin parar, no será posible acabarlas

esta noche. Cierto, yo no sé lo que piensan de mý, sino que soy de yerro o de piedra; y en verdad, que aunque callo, que ando tan cansado que presto han de ver que soy mortal como los demás».[141]

«Tan gran carga de papeles», ¿de dónde venía? Dado que Felipe gobernó un imperio que contaba con más de cincuenta millones de vasallos y se extendía desde las Filipinas, pasando por México y Perú, hasta España, los Países Bajos y la mitad de Italia, se necesitaban muchos «papeles» para gobernarlos a todos, y especialmente para defenderlos. Desde su acceso al trono hasta 1559, y desde 1589 hasta unos meses antes de su muerte, Felipe luchó contra los franceses. Además, hasta 1577 estuvo en guerra con el Imperio otomano, y con Inglaterra a partir de 1585. Desde 1567, con la excepción de seis meses de 1577, también mantenía el ejército más grande de Europa para sofocar la rebelión de sus vasallos en los Países Bajos. A menudo libraba las guerras en más de un frente a la vez, tanto por tierra como por mar; y para financiar todos estos conflictos «gestionó un presupuesto inmenso como no se había visto desde el apogeo del Imperio romano».[142] [⇒]

En cualquier época, hacer la guerra siempre crea un intenso estrés a los gobernantes. No solo exige elevadas cantidades de recursos, que resultan difíciles de reunir, sino que además desvía la atención de otros problemas, al igual que estos otros problemas podían distraer la atención del objetivo de ganar la guerra. Un día, confesaba a su secretario que «holgaría yo mucho de entender» en algunas cosas de máxima importancia «si me dexasen y no cargasen tantas cosas que me traen malparado. Y lo que más siento es embaraçarme tantas cosas como ay que hazer. Si pudiese entender agora» en resolverlas, «me contentaría y lo procuraré así porque si quiero hazer las todas, no haré nada, y es mejor hazer lo que se pudiere».[143]

Felipe prefería solucionar con la pluma los problemas a los que se enfrentaba. Según el embajador inglés en 1575, «se dice que Su Magestad escribe y despacha por billetes más que todos sus secretarios juntos». En 1587, el embajador veneciano proporcionó a su gobierno un excelente resumen del tiempo que le absorbían al rey el leer y escribir:

> Escribe cada día de su propia mano más de un quinterno de papel entre billetes, consultas y decretos, que siempre son transmitidos a sus consejeros, jueces, secretarios y ministros por escrito, y tantos otros negocios secretos que trata por vía de billetes con diversos otros particulares. Y es increíble el tiempo que dedica a firmar cartas, licencias, patentes y también asuntos de gracia y justicia, que algunos días llegan a sumar dos mil.

En 1592, según un espía inglés, la escritura todavía formaba parte del trabajo diario de Felipe, quien «despachaba más asuntos que cualquiera de sus tres secretarios, y de este modo, con la pluma y la bolsa, gobierna el mundo».[144]

Pero este impresionante archivo quedaba incompleto. Tanto el rey como sus ministros destruían deliberadamente documentos confidenciales. Así, en 1579 el presidente del Consejo Real informó al rey de que se hallaba «con algunos papeles» sobre un asunto delicado «fuera de los que se quemaron; y pues esto está ya acabado, si Vuestra Magestad me da licencia, se podrán también quemar». Con su aprobación el rey respondió: «Muy bien me parece que quemáis todos estos papeles que aquí decís, y assí los haced». También los mismos diplomáticos olvidaban o ignoraban que muchos asuntos discutidos por Felipe y sus ministros no habrían dejado rastro documental ninguno porque «ahora sabréis lo que yo más podía decir sobre todas estas cosas e sobre otras que pasan en el mundo que no son para cartas y así no lo quiero decir» (1552), o bien el rey juzgaba que el «negocio que agora corre no es para por escrito» (1579) o eran cosas «de qualidad que no conviene sea [comunicadas] por scripto, sino que se os digan» (1588).[145]

El sistema conciliar

Durante su reinado, la mayoría de los asuntos llegaban a la mesa de Felipe procedentes de trece consejos y una junta permanente en Madrid. Felipe heredó cinco consejos de sus bisabuelos, Fernando e Isabel; otros cinco, más la Junta de Obras y Bosques, de su padre, Carlos V; y los otros tres los instituyó él mismo. A partir de 1561, cuando el rey eligió Madrid como sede permanente de su gobierno central, cada consejo se reunía a unas horas y unos días fijos en el Alcázar, y seguían el mismo ritmo incluso en ausencia del monarca. Cada consejo contaba con un presidente, un secretario y varios consejeros, y desempeñaba dos funciones principales: mantener los derechos y los poderes de la corona en su área de competencia, por un lado, y comentar las cartas y memoriales recibidos en relación con esta, así como recomendar las medidas que el rey debía tomar, por otro. Los oficiales en todas partes de la monarquía recibían órdenes estrictas de enviar su correspondencia a la institución central pertinente. Así, los virreyes de Italia debían dirigir todas sus cartas sobre el «govierno, justicia, patrimonio y hazienda de nuestra corona y fisco, y los otros negocios ordinarios y de partes (como de graçia, mercedes, consultas y provisiones de oficios y beneficios)» al Consejo de Italia; todos los asuntos relacionados con otros gobernantes, al Consejo de Estado; y cualquier asunto relacionado con la Corona de Aragón, la fe, etcétera, al organismo central correspondiente.[146] [⇒]

Al principio de su reinado, en los Países Bajos, Felipe presidía personalmente las reuniones del Consejo de Estado, y continuó haciéndolo cuando regresó a España en 1559, pero a los pocos meses dejó de asistir alegando que ello fomentaría un debate más libre. A partir de entonces, todos percibían su presencia en los debates como señal de la inminencia de una importante decisión política. En los demás casos, excepto el del Consejo Real, al que el rey asistía por tradición cada viernes, los

consejos se comunicaban con Felipe solo por escrito: el secretario, es decir, el presidente, entregaba todos los papeles y consultas pendientes en la antesala del despacho del rey, con un billete resumiendo lo que contenía cada pliego y las recomendaciones del consejo. En cierto momento, un ayuda de cámara los llevaba a la mesa real, donde Felipe los leía y luego garabateaba su decisión sobre el mismo billete, en el amplio margen izquierdo que todos sus ministros dejaban a tal efecto. Algunas de sus respuestas eran breves («Así», «Está bien», «Hágalo», «He holgado mucho»), pero otras se desbordaban entre las líneas, invadiendo el párrafo en cuestión. Una vez que Felipe había escrito sus decretos sobre cada billete o consulta, un ayuda de cámara devolvía el pliego al secretario del consejo en cuestión, el cual redactaba una orden adecuada y la enviaba al rey para su firma [véase lámina 10] y [véase lámina 11].

Al rey le gustaba tener sus días cuidadosamente planificados. Mandaba a sus ministros «venid mañana a la noche» o «mañana después de comer», y esperaba que «vengáis por acá para ver lo que falta y concluirlo, y según el estado en que lo tenéis me avisad mañana a hora de comer para que yo os avise quando os podré oír». Cuando podía, planeaba de antemano sus tareas para toda la semana. Un lunes en 1578, el inquisidor general, Gaspar de Quiroga, pidió una reunión con el rey, pero este contestó: «Yo holgaré mucho de veros, pero tenía ya repartido toda esta semana, a lo menos hasta el sábado». Venido el sábado, advirtió a Quiroga que tendría que esperar un día más: «Mañana domyngo podréis venir acá dadas las tres, que oy no he podido».[147] La llegada de pliegos en el último minuto le molestaba. «Estos extraordinarios me destruyen», se quejaba un día, porque «me estorvan las cosas en que yo pensava entender oy»; y en otra ocasión, cuando se encontraba leyendo una consulta enviada por un ministro y «vuestro criado» trajo otro papel, el rey lo rechazó, escribiendo

en el billete anejo: «No podré ver aquello hasta la mañana por tener mucho para esta noche, que tengo ya entablado. Y será desbaratármelo todo».[148]

Felipe siempre leyó cuidadosamente los documentos que sus ministros le presentaban antes de firmarlos. Aunque más tarde empezó a poner una estampilla en las órdenes rutinarias, seguía examinándolas antes, y a veces tachaba un texto esmeradamente escrito porque había encontrado una irregularidad administrativa («en las que no he firmado desas cédulas me parece que ay inconvenientes, porque las de los tres reynos de Aragón, principalmente la del mysmo reyno, no será obedecida y es contra fueros»); porque no le agradaba el tono («las [cartas] para el rey de Portugal y señoría de Génova son impertinentes, que es casi mandándoles»); por no estar escrito con claridad («Buélbase a hazer, sin lo borrado que no se entienda por nadie»); o porque había detectado un error (la fecha «paréceme que no fue [primero de agosto], sino último de julio. Mírese si es así y enmiéndese la cifra, que no es bien que lleven las cartas ningún error»). También, en ocasiones, insistía en ver con sus propios ojos papeles que sus ministros habrían preferido retener («en esto quiero ver yo mismo los recados que ay»); y cuando estaban en juego asuntos delicados, el rey enmendaba el texto de una carta antes de firmarla, y a menudo añadía una posdata ológrafa.[149] Escribía cartas enteras de su puño y letra al papa y a algunos otros soberanos; a sus esposas, sus hermanas, sus hijas, y otros parientes; y a algunos ministros de confianza sobre los asuntos más delicados.

Muy raras veces, Felipe se confesaba vencido por «los negocios» de su monarquía. En 1562, cuando el Santo Oficio le preguntó bajo juramento por su opinión sobre las declaraciones teológicas de un ministro que entonces estaba preso por herejía, declinó responder a una pregunta porque «Su Magestad no es theólogo». Un cuarto de siglo más tarde, cuando su secretario le

preguntó qué hacer con un crítico de algunas políticas suyas, el rey replicó bruscamente: «Como no soy letrado no sé qué me diga en estas cosas».[150] El único campo en que Felipe admitía libremente (y a menudo) su ignorancia era en los asuntos de su hacienda. De vez en cuando se enfadó al no entender las complejas propuestas que sus asesores le enviaban —«paréceme que dice bien [el autor] algunas cosas, aunque las deve de entender mejor que yo, que no las entiendo nada»; «ya sabéis quán poco entiendo yo qual es mejor o peor memorial, y en llegando a esto no me quiero quebrar la cabeza en lo que no entiendo ni he podido entender en todo my vida»; «he entendido muy poco o casi nada dese papel, aunque lo he leydo más de dos vezes»— o porque aquellos no estaban de acuerdo.[151] «Para quien no entiende poco ni mucho desta material no es bueno aver tanta contrariedad en ella», fulminó un día de 1573, y continuaba: «Yo no sé cómo se pudiese dar a entender a los del consejo de Hazienda, estando tan puestos en lo contrario», especialmente «no pudiendo yo debatirlo con ellos, siendo cosa que no entiendo, y en que no puedo por esto hazer más de lo que ellos me dicen que conviene».[152]

Pero Felipe sabía que no podía darse enteramente por vencido puesto que las finanzas eran «de tanta importancia» que «verdaderamente yo me hallo congojado de no saver lo que hazerme con ellas, importando tanto acertar en tomar buena resolución en ellas». Tenía más confianza en los memoriales presentados por Juan Fernández de Espinosa, el banquero al que había nombrado tesorero general de Castilla —«he leído acá este papel de Juan Fernández, y no los demás, [por]que yo no entiendo nada de aquello ni sabría que decir en ello»—, pero incluso algunas de las propuestas de Fernández dejaban perplejo al monarca. «Cierto que no entiendo palabra dello», se lamentaba tras leer una de ellas en 1577, «y así no sé qué me haga. No sé si sería bueno comunicarlo a alguno, pero tampoco

sé a quién. Y el tiempo corre». Al final, el rey accedió a regañadientes a escuchar a su tesorero general en persona, a condición de «que se lleue los papeles, para yr hablando con ellos en la mano».[153]

Mantener el control regio

El sistema administrativo adoptado por Felipe dotaba de un gran poder a unos pocos ministros. Por ejemplo, los secretarios de cada consejo seleccionaban qué cartas y documentos debía el rey leer al completo y cuáles bastaba con resumir en «puntos»; también decidían sobre cuándo los vería y, en algunos casos, si lo haría. Así, en 1574, cuando la guerra en los Países Bajos había alcanzado un momento crítico, Mateo Vázquez, secretario y capellán real, decidió enviar a su amo un informe sobre un asunto completamente distinto, con un billete que decía: «Aunque veo lo que ocupa el cuidado de Flandes, y que aquel embaraço da poco lugar para attender a otras cosas, me ha parecido acordar a Vuestra Magestad la carta de don Diego de Mendoza que aquí va». En 1586, un pariente del rey agradeció al propio Vázquez el haberse asegurado de que Felipe viera su petición, «pues aunque Su Magestad me hace lo posible, las muchas ocupaciones le podrían divertir algo».[154] A la inversa, ese mismo año y con máximo secreto, Vázquez envió a un colega un papel «que he topado entre los muchos que vienen, que no me ha parecido es para verlo Su Magestad». En 1577, el enemigo de Vázquez, Antonio Pérez, informaba al embajador de España en París, íntimo amigo suyo, de que sus cartas «son de mucha satisfactión a nuestro amo, el qual las ve todas, digo las que conviene». Dos lustros más tarde, el sucesor de Pérez, don Juan de Idiáquez, interceptó y eliminó una carta dirigida al rey por el duque de Medina Sidonia, en la que declinaba su nombramiento para comandar la Armada Española y expresaba serias dudas sobre la conveniencia de la

empresa en sí misma. «No nos hemos atrevido a dar quenta a Su Magestad de lo que vuestra señoría agora escrive», anunciaban Idiáquez y su colega don Cristóbal de Moura. En 1595, cuando el mismo Moura recibió una consulta enviada por el presidente del Consejo de Hacienda, respondió secamente: «No he querido decir a Su Magestad nada desto», pues opinaba que no le gustaría a Felipe.[155]

Salvo que tuviese una recomendación hecha por uno de sus consejos, Felipe casi nunca tomaba una decisión sobre un asunto que llegara a su mesa sin pedir asesoramiento a un ministro de confianza. Cuando recibió un papel sobre la economía en 1578, el rey mandó a su secretario: «Myrad si sería bien que viese alguno, y quién, para ver cómo es aquello, que yo no lo he entendido»; y veinte años más tarde, el nuncio Camillo Caetani (agudo observador del rey) confirmó que «siempre ha deseado [Felipe] el voto de sus consejeros», aunque, continuó Caetani, «por la desconfianza y por guardar el secreto, se ha encerrado en sí mismo y cargado frecuentemente la máquina de sus intereses en pocas personas, y no igualmente capaces de tantos y tan variados manejos».[156]

Esta costumbre administrativa fomentaba rivalidades entre esas «pocas personas». Ya en 1543, Carlos V había prevenido a su hijo de «las paçiones, parcyalydades y casy vandos que se hacían o están hechos entre mis criados» y, con el tiempo, aquellas aumentaban. La amarga rivalidad entre los dos miembros más importantes de la Casa Real, Ruy Gómez de Silva (sumiller de corps) y el duque de Alba (mayordomo mayor), obligaba a casi todos los criados del rey a alinearse con el uno o con el otro. Además, todos los que gozaban del favor del rey se esforzaban por conseguir puestos para sus extensas familias, incluidos los parientes políticos (así, Ruy Gómez ascendió a Juan de Escobedo, el futuro secretario de don Juan de Austria, porque era «primo» de su suegra). De esta forma,

linajes como los Toledo o los Mendoza obtuvieron un gran número de cargos de gobierno, y esto generó una sostenida rivalidad a todos los niveles, dado que «toda la casa de los Mendoza envidia a la casa de Toledo».[157] Destacados ministros también forjaron alianzas con colegas cuyo apoyo podía ayudarles a alcanzar sus objetivos. Así, Antonio Pérez consiguió primero para Gaspar de Quiroga la sede de Toledo y más adelante un birrete de cardenal; Quiroga, a su vez, convenció al rey para que nombrara presidente del Consejo Real a su aliado Antonio Mauriño de Pazos; y Pazos le correspondió cantando alabanzas de Pérez al rey. Igualmente, el «patriotismo» pudo constituir otro factor para fortalecer facciones. Cuando Diego de Simancas, miembro del Consejo Real, analizó por qué el rey había nombrado a Pazos, y no a él, presidente del Consejo, culpó a Quiroga. «Algunos meses antes se dijo en su casa [de Quiroga] que o él sería presidente o quien él quisiese; y él dijo una vez que no había tenido día bueno después que fue obispo, pero que todo lo sufría la señora ambición», ¡una confesión ciertamente reveladora por parte del primado de España! Pero ¿por qué —se preguntaba Simancas—, había tenido que ser Pazos quien Quiroga «quisiese»? La explicación, según él, era de carácter geográfico: «Es de los Quirogas, de Galicia, y [Pazos] gallego, de Pontevedra». Don Gaspar había mirado por su compatriota: «Le hizo nombrar para el obispado de Ávila, diciendo al rey que merecía mejor el arzobispado de Toledo que él mismo; y que se podía y debía servir del en cosas de gran importancia». Al conseguir el nombramiento de un paisano agradecido (aunque no lo bastante cualificado), concluía Simancas, Quiroga «le tenía tan obligado, que podía esperar que le había de tener de su mano».[158]

Felipe introdujo una importante innovación para contrarrestar el riesgo de que las rencillas y facciones dieran oportunidades a sus ministros para engañarle. A principios de

su reinado, instó a sus principales ministros a que «cuando quisiéredes scrivirme alguna cosa para que yo solo lo sepa, agora sea de Estado o de otra cualquiera calidad, poniendo en el sobrescrito que se dé la carta en mi mano, se hará así». Como era de temer, algunos ministros abusaron de la norma, pero no por mucho tiempo. Así, en 1586, el rey perdió la paciencia con un ministro que insistía demasiado en dirigirse a él directamente: «Terrible cosa es esto de embiar las cartas "a mys manos", que para solo abrirlas no ay tiempo muchas vezes. Y así no sirve sino de dilatar los negocios porque estas dos cartas ha días que tengo, y no las he podido abrir hasta agora».[159] Pero Felipe nunca abandonó este mecanismo, ¡y pobre del secretario que abriese una carta dirigida a «el rey en su mano»! En 1594, el secretario particular de Felipe se echó a temblar al descubrir que «abriendo los pliegos que truxo este [correo] ordinario, abrí por descuydo este del presidente [del Consejo Real] que venía "en manos de Vuestra Magestad", y no cahí en ello hasta que fuy a quitar la cubierta, pero certifico a Vuestra Magestad que no llegué a ver letra de lo que está dentro». El rey se enfureció: «Bien será que lo miréis bien de aquí adelante, de manera que no suceda ni aya el descuydo que agora».[160]

De vez en cuando, el rey no se limitaba a medidas de vigilancia tan pasivas. Ordenaba a sus oficiales abrir la correspondencia de los diplomáticos extranjeros residentes en Madrid (práctica que se veía facilitada por la costumbre de confiar sus cartas a los correos del propio rey para ahorrar gastos) y descifrar algunos documentos «que no son para mý» antes de volver a sellar el original y enviarlo a su destino. «Vos y yo avemos de ser como confesores», escribió a Mateo Vázquez cuando le ordenó transcribir documentos «sin que lo vea ni entienda hombre nacido». De vez en cuando Vázquez también recibió órdenes para entablar una correspondencia secreta con un consejero sobre la conducta de otro.[161] Todas estas prácticas

arteras llevaron al embajador veneciano Leonardo Donà a advertir a su gobierno de que, «por naturaleza, [el rey] es a la vez muy prudente y muy receloso»; y en su Relación al Senado de Venecia, al final de su embajada, en 1574, repetía que Felipe nunca se fiaba completamente de nadie: «El rey sufre de la misma enfermedad que su padre: es decir, la sospecha».[162]

En 1565 Gonzalo Pérez, secretario de Estado, que contaba con cuarenta años de experiencia administrativa, subrayó un gran defecto en el *modus operandi* de su amo: «Muchos negocios yerra y yerrará su Magestad por tractarlos con diversas personas, una vez con una y otra con otra y encubriendo una cosa a uno y descubriéndole otras… y así no es de maravillar que salgan despachos diferentes y aun contrarios». Dos años después, su sucesor, Gabriel de Zayas, empleaba términos aún más duros: «El rey ha querido que lo de substançia vaya por tantos arroyos», informaba al duque de Alba, «y no sería de poco seruicio de Su Magestad que acabasse de darnos orden, porque assí todo es un chaos».[163] Felipe se daba cuenta, y para evitarlo nombró a algunos ministros con el fin de que trabajasen en varios consejos. Era frecuente tener a la vez un puesto en el Consejo de Estado y también en el de Guerra, o en el de Indias y el de Hacienda; también era habitual ocupar un asiento en Estado, Guerra y Hacienda simultáneamente, por lo que estos ministros sabían lo que pasaba en otros organismos asesores y podían, al menos en teoría, coordinar los asuntos. En 1559, cuando Felipe regresó a España, Francisco de Eraso había llegado a convertirse en secretario de nada menos que seis consejos y miembro de dos más. En palabras del embajador francés, «la gestión de casi todo está ahora en manos» de Eraso, «dada la estima y la deferencia que su Señor le tiene».[164] Esta «deferencia» duró hasta 1565, cuando las acusaciones de fraude y corrupción alcanzaron tal grado que se determinó emprender una visita, o investigación, sobre la conducta del secretario.

Esto quebrantó su control sobre el gobierno y, un año después, Felipe le impuso una multa de 12.000 ducados, le suspendió en la mayoría de sus cargos durante doce meses y le privó de todos sus puestos en Hacienda.

A continuación, Felipe depositó casi todas las tareas de la monarquía en Diego de Espinosa, nacido de padres hidalgos con escasos medios. Después de que Espinosa, ya sacerdote, estudiara derecho civil y canónico en Salamanca, el rey lo hizo oidor de la Audiencia de Sevilla, donde conoció al jesuita Francisco de Borja, quien en 1559 lo recomendó al rey para ocupar cualquier alto cargo por ser «persona de muchas letras, virtud y prudencia». Atendiendo a esta recomendación, Felipe nombró a Espinosa miembro del Consejo de Estado, presidente del Consejo Real y, en 1568, inquisidor general. Espinosa se había convertido en «el hombre de toda España de quien el rey haze más confianza y con quien más negocios trata, así de España como de fuera ella», y «por su mano pasa todo, sacro y profano, carne, y mundo y spíritu». En resumen, Felipe había convertido a Espinosa en «otro rey de esta Corte», y «en su casa se resuelve todo».[165]

Ahora bien, tanta concentración de poder dio una envidiable coherencia a las políticas del gobierno de Felipe, pero también fomentaba una falsa apariencia de unanimidad entre los encargados de tomar decisiones, tanto activa (frenando la expresión de las posturas disidentes) como pasivamente (orientando los debates de forma que se minimizaba el desacuerdo), al estilo de lo que hoy en día se denomina «pensamiento grupal». La supresión del debate durante el ministerio de Espinosa explica la inflexibilidad que llevó primero a los flamencos y luego a los moriscos de Granada a rebelarse *(véanse capítulos 8 y 11)*; y también puede explicar por qué, tras la repentina muerte del cardenal en septiembre de 1572, el rey no nombró ningún sucesor para «la

superintendencia de lo de la guerra, estado, hazienda y consultas y todo el otro montón de cosas que sobre el cardenal cargavan».[166] Como Felipe informaba al nuevo presidente del Consejo Real,

> pensé que acertaba en encomendar muchas cosas que se me ofrecen al cardenal de las que tocauan a este oficio, y quizá hubo entonzes causas para ello; pero la experiencia ha mostrado que esto no conviene, y aunque esto es más descanso y es menos trauajo mío, no me parece que se puede llevar adelante; y assí solo os encomiendo lo que toca al oficio de presidente.

Felipe había llegado a valorar el consejo que su padre le había dado casi treinta años antes: «No os atéys ny obligéys a uno solo, porque aunque es más descansado no conviene».[167]

El sistema de juntas

Después de la muerte de Espinosa, en lugar de permitir que un solo ministro actuara como «otro rey en la corte» (como los validos de su hijo y de su nieto más tarde), Felipe pedía consejo a una compleja red de juntas coordinadas por Mateo Vázquez, un clérigo de oscuros orígenes (muy posiblemente hijo ilegítimo, fue criado como huérfano) que había servido como secretario de Espinosa. Tras la muerte del cardenal, Vázquez propuso a Felipe un sencillo método para reducir sus cargas. «No parece», escribió con cautela, «que tiene Vuestra Magestad secretario propio, de que resulta no poder escusar de leer y scrivir muchas cosas, y desta ocupación y trabajo se podrían temer en la salud el daño que la experiencia a mostrado siempre en los que más tratan papeles». Vázquez se ofreció a ocuparse él mismo de todo esto, «con qué cessaría mucho del leer y escriuir Vuestra Magestad por su mano».[168]

El 1 de abril de 1573 Vázquez juró como secretario real, y Felipe le encomendó dos tareas fundamentales: se ocuparía de toda la correspondencia dirigida «al rey en su mano» y coordinaría las juntas informales creadas por Espinosa, actuando como secretario de muchas de ellas. Él y su amo

acordaron quiénes integrarían cada junta (y cuándo deberían cesar), la frecuencia de las reuniones y su orden del día. Vázquez también transmitía las instrucciones del rey a cada junta, y presentaba sus recomendaciones al rey. Más tarde, Vázquez se encargó de otras dos tareas adicionales: redactar el borrador de las decisiones del rey sobre las consultas recibidas («Manda Su Magestad que…») y servir como intermediario entre Felipe y los secretarios de cada consejo («me dio Su Magestad […] algunas cartas de prelados sobre la prevención de armas, las cuales me mandó remitir a la Cámara no obstante pareciese de Guerra» o «mandome remitir al presidente de Indias dos cartas, aunque eran de Inquisición de allí»). Vázquez actuó así hasta su muerte en 1591, lo que durante un tiempo lo convirtió «probablemente en el segundo hombre más poderoso del imperio español».[169]

Mateo Vázquez pagó un alto precio por su preeminencia. Vivía siempre a la entera disposición del rey y bajo la obligación de dejar cualquier cosa que estuviera haciendo para ocuparse inmediatamente de otra: «Después que os escriví, se a ofrecido cierta cosa sobre que es menester que os hable oy, y así estad a punto para quando yo os llamaré, que será en pudiendo» (1574); «Mateo Vázquez: este trasladad luego, entretanto que yo escribo y hago lo demás, y hago colación; y me lo embiad para que cierre el pliego para que me quedan acá los demás papeles» (1577); y «veed [esto] myentras yo como y duermo, y me lo embiad para quando despierte, para que lo vea yo y lo que en ello convendrá» (1579).[170]

Pero la energía de Vázquez no podía detener o desviar el aluvión de papeles que llegaba a la mesa del rey. Al principio del reinado, el Consejo de Indias se reunía únicamente durante tres horas cada mañana, pero en 1571 empezó a reunirse también tres tardes a la semana; y el Consejo de Hacienda, que se reunía solo dos veces por semana, pasó en 1580 a despachar

cada mañana durante tres o cuatro horas, a veces continuando durante la tarde. Esto aumentó inevitablemente el número de consultas que llegaban a la mesa de Felipe. Al principio del reinado el Consejo de Guerra apenas generaba dos legajos de documentos al año, pero a partir de 1590 pasó a producir más de treinta —es decir, quince veces más—, y sus secretarios redactaban casi dos mil cartas anuales sobre asuntos militares y navales que luego debían ser revisadas y firmadas por el rey. Por supuesto, la actividad administrativa de otros organismos aumentó a un ritmo similar. Entre marzo de 1572 y el mismo mes de 1573, el rey pasó 161 días en alguno de sus refugios campestres fuera de Madrid (Aranjuez, El Pardo, El Escorial, etcétera), y en esos días recibía más de quinientas carpetas llenas de consultas y cartas enviadas por los ministros desde la capital. Los secretarios del consejo eran los que enviaban la mayor parte del correo —el setenta por ciento—, mientras que cinco ministros concretos, en especial el mayordomo mayor de la reina y los infantes, enviaban otro quince por ciento.[171] Los mismos correos cargaban también memoriales, peticiones de particulares dirigidas al rey para solicitar algo: una pensión o un perdón; un cargo civil o eclesiástico; la recompensa para un servicio; una licencia para publicar un libro; o un hábito o encomienda en una de las órdenes militares. En marzo de 1571, por ejemplo, más de 1.250 memoriales individuales llegaron para la consideración del rey, lo que significaba un promedio de cuarenta al día.

Cada memorial, como cada consulta, requería que el rey tomara una decisión. Algunas eran fáciles —«visto todo, yo me resuelbo en ello» o «tienen razón en esto todo, y así se haga dónde y cómo les pareçe»—, pero otras no. Así, en 1575, Felipe pasó un penoso día como gran maestre de la orden de Santiago «en que me quiebro bien la cabeza porque para 12 encomyendas vacas ay 117 demandadores», de modo que

pospuso la decisión tres días. Pero luego encontró la tarea aún más abrumadora, pues «pidiendo muchos y dándose a pocos, han de quedar descontentos los más. Y por esto y otras cosas digo yo que es muy ruin oficio el mío». Se enfrentaba a decisiones igualmente difíciles cada vez que tenía que cubrir puestos en la Iglesia, en la Casa Real y en su gobierno. Para cada plaza vacante eran numerosos los solicitantes cualificados, la mayoría de los cuales contaban con poderosos mecenas dentro de su séquito. En cada caso, el rey tenía que elegir entre ellos, y en ocasiones se quejaba de que «para entender en cosas caseras» —es decir, los nombramientos para la Casa Real— «me encerré ayer y antier porque de otra manera no me dexan ni es posible hazer nada».[172]

Gracias a estas medidas, y a la alta formación de sus servidores, Felipe se hacía cargo con razonable eficiencia e integridad de la mayor parte de los negocios ordinarios que llegaban a su mesa cada semana, durante todo el año. El *Diurnal* mantenido por Antonio Gracián y Dantisco, quien manejó la correspondencia del rey entre 1571 y 1576, revela la rapidez con que el rey tomaba muchas decisiones: «Por la mañana se dio a Su Magestad un pliego de Escobedo [secretario de Hacienda] y a las seis de la tarde se despachó el correo con las respuestas»; «a las ocho y media de la noche llegó otro correo con despachos del presidente [del Consejo Real] […] y tornó dentro de media hora con la respuesta»; «a la noche, a las diez, llegó un correo con pleguecillo de […] la princesa [Juana] y se había de dar luego al rey, y así se hizo, y a las once tornó con respuesta».[173]Un día de 1577, Felipe devolvió un pliego de papeles al sucesor del fallecido Gracián, Mateo Vázquez, con una orgullosa nota: «Aquí va lo que oy ha venido», y añadía: «Ojalá fue así siempre, que bien es menester». Bien sabía el rey que había algunos asuntos que no lograba resolver tan fácilmente.[174] En 1573, cuando actuaba como virrey en

Nápoles y esperaba órdenes regias, Granvela le escribía en tono de chanza a un amigo: «Si tenemos que esperar la muerte, ojalá viniere de España, porque entonces no llegaría nunca». Tres años más tarde, en Roma, bromeaba más amargamente:

> Yo me estoy aquí de espacio, atendiendo a lo que se offresce y viendo correr los toros del mundo como de una ventana: es verdad que yo algunas vezes ternía ganas de echar mi barrilla porque se corriesse más, pues al passo de buey que vamos, mucho daño reciben las cosas públicas.[175]

El cardenal sabía bien de lo que hablaba. En 1560, cuando era ministro principal de Felipe en los Países Bajos, recibía una queja de Gonzalo Pérez, responsable de coordinar la política exterior de toda la monarquía, de que «he andado achacoso estos días, aunque no me ha estorvado el acudir a tiempo a los negocios, que según van despacio las resoluciones dellos, qualquier gotoso las puede alcanzar». Poco después, el hermano de Granvela, nombrado embajador y que aguardaba instrucciones en vano, le comentó con petulancia: «En lo que respecta a nuestro señor, todo se pospone hasta el día siguiente, y la decisión que rige sobre todas las demás es la de no tomar nunca una decisión».[176]

Los diplomáticos extranjeros estaban de acuerdo. Según afirmaba el embajador francés en 1560, la decisión de Felipe de ser «señor, ministro y secretario a la vez constituye una gran virtud, pero produce tantos retrasos y confusión que todos los que aquí residen se desesperan cada vez que tienen que pedir algo». Una década más tarde, su sucesor se quejaba de que «las decisiones de la corte española son tan inciertas, y tardan tanto, que los que piensan que recibirán despachos en una semana tardan un mes en hacerlo». En 1577, el secretario de Estado papal manifestaba indignado, mientras esperaba en vano que el rey destinara recursos para una acción promovida por el papa, que «la única causa de esta dilación es la falta de resolución de su majestad».[177]

Muchos oficiales de Felipe criticaron su adicción al papeleo. Don Diego de Córdoba, ministro y al mismo tiempo cortesano íntimo del rey, se lamentaba en 1560 de que «es tanta la abundancia de negocios, que todo el día se tiene la cabeça sobre papeles». Una década después, Córdoba se quejaba de que la vida en la corte se había reducido a «papeles y más papeles, y estos crecen cada día» porque el rey «escriue en billetes cada hora, que no es amanecido ni ora de comer, ni anochecido quando entran [sus ayudas de cámara] con papeles […] sobre cosas que, llegadas al cabo, no montan un alfiler». En 1574, don Diego escribió el comentario más memorable: «Su Magestad a trauajado estos días más aún de lo que suele con sus papeles en leer y escreuir, y salióle al ravo (con perdón de Vuestra Señoría) como suelen dezir las putas viejas, y assí el sauado de mañana a las tres le dieron unas camarillas de mierda».[178]

En parte, los «papeles y más papeles» eran el corolario inevitable del estilo administrativo elegido por el rey: mantener compartimentado el gobierno; tratar todo lo que podía por escrito; reservarse tantos asuntos para su escrutinio personal, y de esto venía (por adaptar la metáfora de don Diego) la *verborrea* del rey. Por ejemplo, un día de 1565, tras haber escrito ya dos veces a Pedro de Hoyo, secretario de la Junta de Obras y Bosques, Felipe se acordó de pronto de otra cosa más: «En entrambos villetes que oy os he embiado, os he querido decir lo que aquí diré, y siempre se me ha holvidado, teniéndolo en el pico de la lengua». Y ¿cuál era esta información tan urgente? Sencillamente, que había decidido no enviar una copia de la edición trilingüe de la Biblia a El Escorial, debido a que en la biblioteca ya había una. Algo más tarde, interrumpió lo que estaba haciendo para informar a Hoyo de que «aunque estoy con 100.000 papeles delante, me ha parecido acordaros lo que aquí diré»: un recordatorio de «las piedras que faltan por

traer» para completar la capilla de El Escorial, e instrucciones para que «se acabe el estanque pequeño que agora se haze» en la Casa de Campo.[179]

Cabría argumentar que el rey tenía el derecho de prestar atención minuciosa a los varios retiros campestres en los que tanto tiempo pasaba, pero algunos de los otros temas que absorbían su tiempo resultaban sorprendentes. Entre las entradas en el *Diurnal* de Gracián, se detallan unas «menudencias» —como las llama el autor— en las que Felipe insistía en ocupar su tiempo. La exasperación del secretario ante este rasgo del carácter de su señor queda particularmente patente en la entrada correspondiente al 2 de junio de 1573, un momento clave para los esfuerzos bélicos que se estaban realizando tanto en los Países Bajos como en el Mediterráneo: «Fui a San Jerónimo antes de comer llamado por Su Magestad donde, excepto una consulta de Juan Vázquez a que respondí de mi mano, todo el día se gastó» —una expresión elocuente— «en platicar y conferir sobre lo de la trasladación de los cuerpos reales del príncipe [don Carlos] y reina [Isabel] a San Lorenzo» de El Escorial.[180] Al año siguiente, el rey comenzaba su respuesta a una carta del inquisidor general: «A lo demás que aquí decís responderé con pocas palabras porque no tengo tiempo para muchas», a lo que seguían ¡tres páginas de comentarios! Una noche de 1575, Felipe comenzaba así una nota a Mateo Vázquez: «Hasta agora, que son las XI, he estado esperando el pliego que me avíades de embiar» y «ya no puedo esperarle más, que ni tengo ojos ni cabeça», pero todavía pospuso el momento de acostarse escribiendo dos páginas sobre —como don Diego de Córdoba habría dicho— «cosas que, llegadas al cabo, no montan un alfiler».[181] Cuando uno de sus ministros intentó con ironía frenar el entusiasmo del rey por saberlo y hacerlo todo —«no querría cansar a Vuestra Magestad con estas menudencias»—, el rey replicó, impávido: «No me

canso, sino que huelgo con ellas». A veces, confesó que escribía por el simple placer de hacerlo: «No ay para qué me respondáis», le aseguraba a Mateo Vázquez tras varias páginas de quejas, «pues no lo digo sino para descansar con vos».[182] ¡Descansar!

La mayor cabeza del mundo

Estos intercambios epistolares ocasionaron críticas como las de Córdoba, que se quejó de que el rey gastaba su tiempo en «menudencias» en lugar de tomar decisiones cruciales de las que dependía el destino de la monarquía. En 1574, Leonardo Donà aseguró al Senado de Venecia que «el rey se ocupa en muchas menudencias que le quitan el tiempo por mayores cosas». Diez años más tarde, el cardenal Granvela se quejaba amargamente:

> En todos los asuntos veo estos retrasos, tan perniciosos y en tantos sentidos perjudiciales para nuestros intereses, incluidos los más importantes, que llegan a perderse de vista con tanta demora. Y la razón radica en que su Majestad quiere hacerlo y verlo todo, sin confiar en nadie más, ocupándose él mismo de tantos detalles nimios que no le queda tiempo para resolver lo que más importa.[183]

En 1589, don Juan de Silva, que llevaba más de medio siglo al servicio de Felipe como paje, soldado, embajador y consejero, escribió la crítica más completa sobre el sistema administrativo de su amo. Empezó con una denuncia de «la menudencia con que Su Magestad trata los negocios más menudos: años ha que entendemos que es materia de lástima, porque perder el tiempo para no ocuparle, esso es lo que los hombres llaman passatiempo, mas ocuparle para perderle cosa es a que no se puede poner el nombre que tiene», y continuó:

> Estas conclusiones son ciertas, que [ni] la cabeça de su Magestad, que deue ser la mayor del mundo, ny otra de hombre umano, es capaz de digerir la multitud de sus negocios sin hazer división de los que conviene tomar para sý, y de los que no puede escusar de encargar a otros. También es cierto que su Magestad no haze esta distinción, sino a otra muy prejudicial, no dexando ninguno enteramente y tomando de todos la parte que auía de remitir, que es la particular y la menuda, y assy como no se aplica a la parte más universal y substantial, antes le cansa.[184]

¿Se debe dar crédito a estas críticas? Al fin y al cabo, algunas

de ellas estaban escritas con furia y frustración: para 1584, Granvela era ya un anciano amargado que se había visto brutalmente relegado del centro a la periferia del poder, mientras que Silva se retiró a sus señoríos en 1589, decepcionado porque el rey no le había compensado como anticipaba. Por su parte, lo que en realidad les molestaba a embajadores como Donà era que el monarca no se concentraba en los asuntos que les afectaban más directamente.

No obstante, las críticas tenían un punto de razón. A pesar de que Felipe se quejaba de que «las muchas ocupaciones y grandes negocios que se ofrecen estos días» le impedían hacer las cosas que quería, los mismos documentos muestran que sí podía encontrar tiempo para las «menudencias» que le interesaban. Por ejemplo, en agosto de 1572, mientras se afanaba por sofocar la revuelta holandesa y a la vez temía que Francia le declarara la guerra, Felipe recibió una carta del prior del monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial quejándose de que sus frailes se negaban a aceptar la asignación de las celdas que él había decidido. Por eso, «supplico a Vuestra Magestad en esto nos la haga, como siempre». Olvidando sus «muchas ocupaciones» y también sus obligaciones hacia Flandes y Francia, el rey actuó de inmediato. De su propia mano, contestó al prior:

> Yo açeto el oficio de hazer el aposento de los religiosos como quien tiene en la cabeça todo lo del aposento de aquella Casa, pero que para esto será menester que me embíe una memoria de todos los frayles que ay en ella por su antigüedad y los oficios que tienen, con que también lo es tener quenta para lo del aposento.

En cuanto la lista llegó, el monarca más poderoso del Occidente se puso a asignar las celdas a unos frailes. Nos consta que lo hizo en persona porque, dos semanas después, el prior contestó: «Recibí el repartimiento que Vuestra Magestad ha sido servido de hazer de las celdas de los religiosos… y en ser de mano de Vuestra Magestad, las ternán en muy particular favor

y merced».[185] Cabe preguntarse si las horas que le ocupó esta tarea no habrían estado mejor invertidas en considerar cómo resolver la grave situación en el norte de Europa.

La maldición de las audiencias

El propio rey veía las cosas de una manera diferente. Para él, la principal causa de los retrasos eran las audiencias solicitadas por ministros y embajadores, que a menudo lo ocupaban durante demasiadas horas y le arrebataban el tiempo y la energía necesarios para sumergirse en el mar de papeles que lo esperaba. En teoría, mientras estaba en Madrid, Felipe concedía audiencias «de nuebe a díez por las mañanas y de cinco a seis por las tardes», y, además, caminaba deliberadamente despacio cuando acudía a misa para que sus súbditos pudieran hablar con él o formularle sus peticiones en persona.[186] En la práctica, las audiencias consumían mucho más tiempo de su jornada. Cuando en 1577 Mateo Vázquez sugirió que el tesorero general de Castilla, Juan Fernández de Espinosa, vendría a las dos de la tarde, Felipe protestó enérgicamente:

> Que viniese Juan Fernández a las tres y media, porque ya agora son las dos, y no tengo otro tiempo de ver a la reyna y a sus hijos sino este; y encargalde que no sea más que de allí a las cuatro, porque entonces tengo hartas audiencias, aunque he tenido treinta oy. Y con esto ¡myrad la reprisa que habrá de papeles!

Seis años más tarde, el presidente del Consejo de Hacienda suplicaba al rey que los recibiese en audiencia, a él y a sus compañeros, cada semana aunque solo fuera para recibir sus aplastantes reproches. «Mucho holgaré de oír a todos», respondió, pero «mejor es no ocuparme el tiempo que tanto es menester para tantas cosas y tanto me falta».[187]

El deseo de Felipe de limitar el número de reuniones era lógico. Como la experiencia universal demuestra, las reuniones siempre duran demasiado. Se quejaba de ello a Vázquez en 1576 —«el embaxador [de Portugal] estuvo acá y me habló arto largo y me hizo perder toda una mañana con que no he podido

aun bolver a cobrar el tiempo que en ella perdí»— y, pocos meses después, se mostraba molesto porque «acababan de venir acá el embajador de Francia y otros, con que me harán perder el día». Asimismo, en 1578, «cargan tantas audiencias y cosas que no me han dexado responder hasta agora». En realidad, como el rey comentó desesperado en cierta ocasión, «audiencias y papeles no caben en un saco».[188]

Pero el propio Felipe tenía la culpa de alargar algunas reuniones. En 1588, concedió una audiencia al padre José de Acosta para que le presentara un informe sobre los problemas a los que se enfrentaba la Compañía de Jesús en España. Mientras Acosta leía cada apartado, Felipe iba intercalando preguntas. Cuando Acosta mencionó a «un secretario del padre Borja, interrumpióme el rey y dixo: "¿Qué padre Borja?". Dixe: "El que fue general de nuestra compañía". "El padre Francisco, queréys dezir", me dixo el rey. "Sí, Señor, el padre Francisco de Borja, nuestro general"». El relato de Acosta ocupa cuatro páginas con letra apretada, por lo que es poco probable que la reunión durara menos de una hora.[189]

Las audiencias con los embajadores podían alargarse aún más, y en la corte de Felipe residían enviados de hasta catorce Estados, cada uno de los cuales trataba constantemente de encontrar ocasión para explicarle personalmente al rey una política determinada, obtener alguna aclaración sobre las intenciones de España o protestar contra alguna de las actuaciones de Felipe. El rey podía postergar cada audiencia, pero al final tenía que recibir y escuchar a cada embajador, aunque por lo general no les decía prácticamente nada. Leonardo Donà, que anotaba palabra por palabra lo que se decía en cada audiencia, rara vez registró más de una frase de los reales labios («con pocas palabras, pero verdaderamente exquisito como es su costumbre»; con «tres o cuatro palabras», aunque «como siempre, […] de lo más corteses»; [véase lámina 12].[190]

En algunas ocasiones, el rey «desconectaba» durante las audiencias. Así, cuando en 1576 un ministro le pidió a Mateo Vázquez que le consiguiera una, Felipe confesó: «De las audiencias me queda poco en la cabeza, aunque esto no se lo diréis, digo de las más dellas». En otras ocasiones, sin embargo, el rey escuchaba con suma atención. Cuando Donà le dijo durante una audiencia en 1573 que, a pesar de su alianza española, Venecia había concluido una paz secreta con los turcos, el embajador quedó impresionado porque Felipe escuchó sus palabras callado, aunque «su boca esbozó un muy ligero gesto irónico, sonriendo levemente». Pero este silencio escondía su furia: pocas horas después, cuando el rey participó a un ministro que los venecianos habían «hecho la paz con el Turco», malévolo, añadió: «Yo espero en Dios que a quien peor ha de [e]star ha de ser a ellos».[191]

Los que esperaban audiencias se sentían aún más frustrados cuando Felipe salía de Madrid para recogerse en una de sus casas de campo. En una de las quejas sobre el rey de las que Diego de Simancas dejó constancia en su mezquina autobiografía, este afirmaba que había ido a Madrid especialmente a «besar las manos al rey», pero Felipe «de repente se fue (como suele) a El Escorial. Y quise yr allá, y dijo que no era necesario que tomase aquel trabajo, que el [rey] volverá presto, lo cual dilató un mes entero. Que es ya refrán: que sus idas son ciertas y sus tornadas inciertas». En 1586, el nuncio lamentaba que «resulta irritante que el rey viva tan cerca [en El Escorial], y, a pesar de no estar ocupado con nada importante, yo lleve cuatro meses sin poder conseguir audiencia con él y no haya recibido respuesta a ninguno —o muy pocos — de los memoriales que le he mandado durante todo este tiempo».[192]

Con el tiempo, tanto sus ministros como los embajadores extranjeros aprendieron a respetar estas costumbres del rey. Así,

el experimentado embajador francés, el barón de Fourquevaux, demoró el cumplimiento de una orden expresa de París de solicitar audiencia porque sabía que Felipe «prefiere que los embajadores traten con él por carta, más que en persona, cuando se encuentra en sus casas de campo». Del mismo modo, cuando un embajador extraordinario viajó de Venecia a España para felicitar a Felipe por la victoria en la batalla de Lepanto, Donà no le permitió que pidiera audiencia hasta que el rey regresara a Madrid de El Escorial, porque «Su Majestad no quiere que los embajadores vengan a importunarle».[193] Algunos diplomáticos llegaban a comprender incluso las razones del rey. En 1576, el sucesor de Donà dijo que Felipe «pasa casi todo su tiempo fuera de la Corte, en parte para escapar de las agotadoras audiencias y en parte para ocuparse mejor de sus negocios», a pesar de que «nunca deja de leer ni escribir, ni siquiera cuando viaja en su carruaje». Fray José de Sigüenza, quien llevaba observando al rey en El Escorial desde hacía cinco lustros, se mostraba de acuerdo: «Se negociaba aquí [en el monasterio] más en un día que en Madrid en quatro, por el concierto de la vida».[194] Pero este «concierto» era solamente una de las razones por las que Felipe pasaba tanto tiempo en el monasterio que construyó al noreste de Madrid. Allí, también podía ganar tiempo para pensar con claridad sobre los problemas, tanto grandes como pequeños, a los que constantemente se enfrentaba.

5. El rey y su Dios

El rey devoto

La *Historia de Felipe II, rey de España*, de Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, la mejor «vida» del rey escrita por alguien que le conoció bien, comienza con una impresionante portada. El rey, ataviado con armadura y la espada desenvainada, se erige —frente al ataque de unos hombres profusamente armados— en único defensor de la Religión, imaginada como una mujer que lleva en una mano la cruz y en la otra un cáliz. Junto a él aparece la divisa *Suma ratio pro religione*, «la principal razón es la que favorece a la religión» [véase lámina 13]. La imagen resume todo el libro de Cabrera de Córdoba, en el que Felipe, defensor de la Iglesia católica, siempre antepone la protección de la fe a cualquier otra meta. Sin embargo, el lugar que realmente ocupaba la religión en la vida de Felipe II, tanto en la esfera pública como en la privada, fue un asunto mucho más complejo.

El rey nunca abandonaba las costumbres religiosas aprendidas de niño *(véase capítulo 1)*. En «la Instrucción que di a my hermano», cuando don Juan de Austria salió de la corte por primera vez como capitán general, Felipe empezó detallando sus deberes religiosos, tal y como había hecho su padre con él veinticinco años antes:

> Primeramente, porque el fundamento y principio de todas las cosas y de todos los buenos consejos ha de ser en Dios, os encargo mucho, que como bueno y verdadero cristiano, toméys este principio y fundamento en todo lo que emprendiéredes y hiciéredes; y que a Dios, como a principal fin, enderecéys todas vuestras cosas y negocios.

E insistía:

> Tendréys muy particular cuenta con frecuentar y continuar la confesión, principalmente las Pascuas y otros días solemnes, y con recibir el Santísimo Sacramento, estando en las partes y lugares que lo podáis hazer; y de oyr (estando en tierra) de continuo misa; y de tener vuestras oraciones y devociones particulares en alguna hora y tiempo de recogimiento para ellas, haziendo en

todo el officio y demostración de muy cathólico y buen cristiano.[195]

Era el mismo régimen religioso que seguía Felipe. Él también acudía a misa a diario, escuchaba los sermones al menos una vez a la semana, y confesaba y comulgaba al menos cuatro veces al año. También pasaba mucho tiempo en devociones privadas. Su ayuda de cámara, Jehan Lhermite, anotaba que «desde que le conocí y empecé a servirle, que fue desde 1590, no pasó un solo día en que no dedicaba [Felipe] un buen espacio de tiempo» a «la contemplación u oración mental». Lhermite asimismo dijo que en el dormitorio regio «no había rincón donde no se viera una imagen devota de algún santo o crucifijo, y siempre tenía [Felipe] los ojos fijos y absortos en estas imágenes y el espíritu elevado hasta el cielo». Otro ayuda de cámara, Juan Ruiz de Velasco, «le daba [al rey] sus libros de devoción y abría delante de él un pequeño oratorio transportable que llevaba siempre consigo» con «imágenes del Santo Crucifijo y de Nuestra Señora en medio relieve de plata a las que se habían concedido indulgencias plenarias. Su Majestad pasaba horas enteras ocupado especulando y cavilando en estas divinas y espirituales contemplaciones».[196]

Los anaqueles que Felipe tenía junto a su lecho en El Escorial estaban llenos de obras religiosas. Algunas le habían acompañado desde su infancia (la *Vita Christi* de Ludolfo de Sajonia, el Cartujano); otras reflejaban la ferviente espiritualidad de la Iglesia contrarreformista española, como, por ejemplo, las *Obras* de Luis de Granada y de Teresa de Ávila (la única autora femenina de toda la colección del rey). Un *Martirologio romano*, una vida de san Diego de Alcalá, algunos santorales y varios libros sobre los santuarios marianos de Guadalupe, Montserrat y Loreto testimonian la devoción de Felipe por la Virgen María y los santos, mientras que diversas obras litúrgicas (un breviario, un misal, unos oficios y un ejemplar de la Biblia Políglota) le ayudaban a seguir los

servicios celebrados en El Escorial. En 1597, a la edad de setenta años, cuando legó a su hija Isabel Clara Eugenia «una imagen de Nuestra Señora y su hijo bendito» que ha «oído decir que primero fue de la Reina Católica mi bisagüela», señaló que su madre la emperatriz se la había regalado a él y la «he traído siempre conmigo desde el año de [15]35».[197]

El rey se alejaba periódicamente del gobierno para concentrarse en sus devociones. Solía irse de «retiro» en Semana Santa y en periodos de gran agotamiento mental (tras la muerte de miembros de su familia, por ejemplo) y no descuidaba sus prácticas religiosas. En junio de 1572, cuando un mensajero llegó a última hora de la tarde cargado con pliegos de varios consejos, entre ellos una consulta sobre «las prevenciones de Flandes» (donde la revuelta se estaba extendiendo rápidamente), «Su Magestad mandó que no se diesen hasta otro día por la mañana por haber confesado aquella tarde y haber de comulgar otro día». Cinco años más tarde, cuando sus ministros le enviaron unos papeles el Sábado Santo, el rey estalló: «Creo que piensan en Madrid que no ay aquí semana sancta, ni pasqua, ni confesión, ni comunión, según lo que estos días carga […]. Y por ser oy día de confesión, y tener otras cosas, no puedo ver nada desto».[198] A lo largo del año litúrgico, surgían retrasos cada vez que el rey atendía a un servicio («lo demás que va aquí no pude ver ayer ni oy hasta agora, por los oficios de las misas» y «más yo no puedo agora, que es muy tarde, ni creo podré mañana por ser día de vísperas y maytines») o después de haber escuchado un sermón («no es posible embiarle más esta noche por aver sido oy día de sermón»).[199]

Sin duda sus numerosas actividades religiosas también permitían al rey alejarse un poco del constante estrés que conllevaba la toma de decisiones, y de este modo renovaba su fuerza y su capacidad para ocuparse de asuntos más graves. Por

ejemplo, en agosto de 1579 un perspicaz embajador veneciano percibió un asombroso paralelismo entre el comportamiento de Felipe antes de prender al secretario real Antonio Pérez y a la princesa de Éboli y el que precedió al arresto del hijo del rey, don Carlos, once años antes:

> Parece que Su Majestad había considerado esto con mucha madurez, porque la mañana precedente se confesó et comulgó en la capilla pública de su palacio, aunque no era día festivo, y aunque hace muchos años en que no había comulgado en lugar similar; pero la coincidencia de que sí había hecho el mismo cuando se resolvía de arrestar al príncipe don Carlos, su hijo, da a pensar que juzgando ella había querido encomendar este negocio importante primero a Dios.

Fray José de Sigüenza también especulaba que cuando Felipe iba «muy solo a retirarse» en su oratorio, debía de estar «haciendo estado a su verdadero Señor y Rey; y allí sin duda aprendía, y Dios secretamente le inspiraba en su alma, lo que había de hacer después».[200]

Pero el obsequioso fraile exageraba un poco. En la víspera de la festividad de San Lorenzo en 1571, mientras los frailes de El Escorial celebraban los oficios, un ministro informó a un colega que «a todo se halló Su Magestad, aunque parte de los maytines escrivió lo que va a vuestra merced». Tres años más tarde, el rey devolvió una consulta, admitiendo «he visto todo esto, aunque a priesa y lo más dello en vísperas»; y en 1584, estando en El Escorial durante la Semana Santa, cuando «se me hicieron los dos más largos sermones que he oído en mi vida», el rey confesaba a sus hijas que «dormí parte de ellos».[201] Aun mientras permanecía despierto, la atención obsesiva de Felipe por los detalles podía interferir en sus devociones. Así, durante la primera misa celebrada en la basílica de San Lorenzo, «el Rey Católico, como tan universal hombre en las reglas del misal y nuevo rezado» estaba «mirando al misal para ver si se guarda lo que allí se manda, y si ve que alguna cosa no se guarda lo envía a decir y advertir luego», de manera que «en lo que tocaba a

cosa de sacristía sabía [el rey] más della y tenía más cuidado que los mismos sacristanes».[202]

El rey también trató de movilizar la fe de otros para suplir los efectos de su intensa devoción personal. Ordenaba periódicamente que todos los prelados de sus dominios llamaran al rezo público para «causas» que él consideraba importantes. En la década de 1560, entre dichas «causas» se encontraban la unión de la Iglesia, el éxito del Concilio de Trento, la derrota de los turcos, la salud de la reina, el final de una epidemia de peste y la victoria sobre los moriscos de las Alpujarras. En la década de 1570, el rey estableció una amplia cadena de oración por toda Castilla para solicitar la protección divina; y ordenó a sus obispos «que lo encomendéis a Nuestro Señor y que se lo hagáis encomendar en vuestra diócesis, y por otras personas que vos entendáis que serán acetas sus oraciones» para que Dios le concediera la victoria en sus empresas.[203]

Felipe no solo acentuaba lo positivo, sino que también procuraba eliminar lo negativo. Temeroso de que, a menos que sus vasallos llevasen una vida devota, podría perder el apoyo divino, el rey apelaba periódicamente a su clero para que instara a sus feligreses a seguir el buen camino. En 1577, mientras consideraba la alternativa entre paz y guerra en los Países Bajos, emitió órdenes a todos los obispos de España, «volviéndolos a encargar la oración por las causas públicas pues ay tanta necesidad dello, y que atiendan con mucho cuidado a la enmienda y castigo de los pecados, apretando en las faltas, particularmente las que huviere en los eclesiásticos, para que los castiguen». También mandó a sus jueces seglares que «castiguen a las mancevas» y procuren «el remedio de estos y otros pecados, como tantas vezes os he escrito, que no creo que acaba de aver enmienda dellos», porque «conviene que todos procuremos de aplacar a Nuestro Señor que, según lo que parece, le devemos tener muy ofendido con nuestras culpas».[204]

Cuando se trataba de tomar decisiones que implicaban complejos juicios morales, Felipe a menudo convocaba una junta especial de teólogos: cómo recaudar fondos de guerra del clero de Castilla; qué hacer cuando fue excomulgado por el papa Paulo IV; qué medidas tomar respecto a la herejía en los Países Bajos; si hacer valer o no sus derechos al trono de Portugal. Sobre otros asuntos políticos, el rey recurría a menudo a su confesor, a quien preguntaba si se podía «en conciencia» aplicar unas medidas concretas. Así, en 1583 informaba al presidente del Consejo de Indias que, en el futuro, «para este punto y los demás que tocaren a su conciencia, será justo que se halle» en las reuniones su confesor, fray Diego de Chaves, porque «su intención es que ninguna cosa se haga contra conciencia». Unas cuantas opiniones escritas de Chaves, todas ellas lacónicas pero decisivas, han sobrevivido. Por ejemplo, cuando se le preguntó si «es lícito en consciencia» un borrador de propuesta para renegociar las deudas del rey, Chaves respondió en el mismo día: «Al dicho caso se responde que es lícito y si fuere menester dar las razones, se darán». Seis años más tarde, Felipe sometió a su confesor una lista de candidatos para obispados vacantes en Nueva España, y enseguida Chaves contestó: «Enbio con este todas las consultas que oy me embió, digo me dieron», incluida una evaluación de cada candidato y sus recomendaciones. El rey aceptó, «pues yo soy obligado a nombrar el mejor», pero añadió (al parecer con cierta desconfianza): «i si no acertare, que abré cumplido con my obligación».[205]

Chaves, confesor real entre 1578 y 1592, no solo reaccionó, sino que en algunas ocasiones también amenazó. En 1592, negó la absolución al rey, privándole de comulgar en Semana Santa, hasta que nombrase un presidente para el Consejo Real. Felipe envió a don Cristóbal de Moura, su sumiller de corps, con «el pliego para fray Diego sin sobrescrito, que le daréis oy,

y me traeréis para la noche la resolución, y procurad de allanarle para que yo pueda ganar el jubileo esta semana». Pero el confesor repitió su amenaza —«Vuestra Magestad tiene precisa obligación de luego proveer de personas que traten los negocios, pues que Vuestra Magestad no puede ni despachar estando sano, cuanto más enfermo»— y añadió un malintencionado paralelismo sobre la forma en que Felipe trataba a los infractores en su corte: «Yo, confesor de Vuestra Magestad, ni puedo ni sé decir más, ni me obliga Dios a más, porque yo no tengo de reconvenir a Vuestra Magestad delante del alcalde Armenteros [responsable de la ley y el orden en la Corte]. Pero oblígame el mismo Dios a no administrarle a Vuestra Magestad ningún sacramento, no haciendo las cosas dichas».[206]

Felipe no solo confiaba en los vivos para movilizar la ayuda divina en su favor, también recurría a la intercesión de los muertos. Mostraba una «avaricia santa» (la frase es de Sigüenza) por las reliquias, empezando en 1550, durante su viaje por Alemania, cuando encontró en Colonia «grandíssima summa de cabeças y huessos» de supuestos santos, tantos que parecía a su séquito «que en todo el mundo no avía otros tantos, ni tantas reliquias, como en aquella sola ciudad». El príncipe y sus compañeros compraron varias y las llevaron a España. En 1557, cuando sus tropas ocuparon la villa francesa de San Quintín, el rey tomó bajo su protección personal «muchas reliquias y el cuerpo de san Quintín y la cabeça de san Andrés» y las puso «con mucha veneración» sobre «el altar de su capilla» en el campo, antes de enviarlos todos a España.[207] Diez años más tarde, a petición suya, el papa le concedió permiso para que coleccionase las reliquias donde él quisiera y, durante los siguientes treinta años, reunió en El Escorial no menos de 7.422 reliquias, incluidos 12 cuerpos enteros, 144 cabezas y 306 miembros completos de diversos santos, junto con lujosos

relicarios para guardarlos, algunos de ellos con billetes de identificación escritos por el propio Felipe [véase lámina 14]. Según Sigüenza, al final de la vida del rey, «no tenemos noticia de santo ninguno de que no haya aquí reliquia, excepto tres». Durante su última enfermedad, cada vez que estaba consciente, Felipe pedía que le llevaran junto a la cabecera de su cama algunas reliquias determinadas, y allí las besaba y suplicaba su ayuda; y cuando perdía la conciencia, la única manera de despertarle era gritando: «"¡No toquéis en las reliquias!", fingiendo que llegaba a ellas alguno, y luego el rey abría los ojos».[208]

La fe de Felipe, y la certidumbre de que gozaba de una relación especial con Dios, se reflejaban de muchas otras maneras. Al igual que los Reyes Magos, cada Navidad donaba cálices dorados que contenían oro, incienso y mirra; repetidamente se refería a sí mismo como «padre y pastor» de su pueblo; y sus cartas y documentos estaban llenos de alusiones a Dios. En 1559, cuando tenía que elegir entre volver a España o permanecer en los Países Bajos, Felipe le confió a Granvela, su principal ministro, que «como no dependa sino de la voluntad de Dios, no hay que hazer sino esperar lo que Él será más servido, y yo espero en Él que, pues me ha sacado de otros barrancos mayores, me sacará también deste». Justo después de su regreso a la península, le dijo a Granvela: «Principalmente os encomyendo las cosas de la religión, pues veis quánto es menester, y quan pocas ay ya en el mundo que curen della; y así los pocos que quedamos es menester que tengamos más cuydado de la christiandad, y si fuere menester lo perdamos todo por hazer en esto lo que devemos». En 1565, Felipe pidió a otro principal ministro clerical «que en todo me avise de lo que entendiere que más convenga al servicio de Dios, que es lo que principalmente yo pretendo, y después al mýo».[209]

Felipe atribuía cada éxito y cada victoria a la intervención y el favor divinos, asegurando a sus ministros que «Dios lo ha hecho». Cuando las reliquias del beato fray Diego de Alcalá salvaron, al parecer, a su hijo y heredero, don Carlos, cuando este estaba al borde de la muerte en 1562, el rey lo vio, al igual que su hijo y sus súbditos, como un milagro, e insistió en que el papa canonizara a fray Diego hasta que lo consiguió en 1588. A la inversa, Felipe racionalizaba cada fracaso y cada derrota como una prueba divina a su perseverancia. Cuando en la primavera de 1578 Castilla experimentaba una sequía, el rey observó: «Muy ayrado debe estar Nuestro Señor pues no llueve, siendo tanto menester»; y en el otoño siguiente, al morir su querido sobrino Wenceslao, reaccionó filosóficamente: «Por cierto que ha sido lástima, mas Dios que lo hizo devía de saver lo mejor».[210] El rey esperaba no solo que Dios «recompensara» tal constancia, sino también que le hiciese conseguir sus objetivos, incluso, si era necesario, mediante un milagro. Así, en 1574, en medio de un torrente de malas noticias, Felipe se lamentaba ante su secretario Mateo Vázquez: «Cierto si no es haziendo Dios mylagros, lo que no merecen nuestros pecados, no es posible sostenernos ya no digo años sino meses». Las noticias de otros reveses posteriores, en lugar de llevarle a replantearse sus políticas infructuosas, reforzaron su esperanza de un milagro: «Dios nos ayude en todo, que yo os digo que es tanto menester que aun parece que se ha de ser servido con hazer milagro, porque sin él yo lo veo todo en los peores términos que puede ser».[211]

Felipe no distinguía entre sus propios intereses y los de Dios. Con asombrosa presunción, en 1573 tranquilizó a un ministro desanimado diciendo: «Spero en Dios […] que os dará mucha salud y vida, pues se empleara en su servicio y en el mío, que es lo mismo»; en tanto que, tres años después, al escuchar que otro de sus funcionarios había caído enfermo, escribió:

«Spero en Dios le ha de dar fuerzas y salud para tan grandes trabajos, como pasa por Su servicio y el mýo». En 1592 seguía desplegando idéntica retórica al instar al Consejo de la Inquisición a que continuara haciendo «lo que tanto conviene al servicio de Dios y al mýo, y a la autoridad de el Santo Oficio, que no se puede dividir lo uno de lo otro».[212]

El rey católico

El entusiasmo de Felipe por la persecución de la herejía constituye el reflejo más famoso (o infame) de una convicción que le llevaba a creer que él sabía exactamente lo que Dios quería. Auspició con vehemencia la quema en la hoguera de casi trescientos protestantes en Inglaterra entre 1555 y 1558 y mandó ajusticiar a unos trescientos más en los Países Bajos entre 1556 y 1565 *(véanse capítulos 3 y 8)*. Poco después de su regreso a España, presenció un gran auto de fe celebrado en Valladolid en 1559, durante el cual sacó su espada, símbolo de la justicia (como en la portada del libro de Cabrera de Córdoba), y juró que siempre defendería la autoridad del Santo Oficio *(véase capítulo 7)*. Y, en efecto, lo hizo. Presidió cuatro autos de fe más, y consultaba a menudo a los inquisidores generales (a los cuales él había nombrado) sobre una gran variedad de temas. En 1577, cuando Gaspar de Quiroga le aseguró al rey que «Teresa de Jesús es buena religiosa y de muy buena vida y exemplo, y que se ocupa y emplea siempre en servicio de Dios», Felipe prometió que «escribiré al corregidor de Ávila conforme a lo que os parece» para proteger la futura santa y «estas monjas» contra sus émulos. Después de 1578, ya cardenal, Quiroga fue alojado a su lado, en «el aposento de my hermano [don Juan], que aya Gloria», en el Alcázar de Madrid.[213]

Felipe también instaba a otros gobernantes católicos a seguir su ejemplo en cosas de la fe. Cuando en 1572 se enteró de que Carlos IX de Francia había autorizado la masacre de San

Bartolomé, Felipe declaró que «tuve uno de los mayores contentamientos que he recibido en mi vida»; y cuando, durante su próxima audiencia, el embajador francés le enteraba de la matanza, Felipe «empezó a reírse, dando muestras de sumo placer y satisfacción», y dijo que ningún rey igualaba a Carlos «en valentía o prudencia».[214] Felipe también promovía la causa católica con iniciativas encaminadas a encontrar una vía intermedia que diese fin al cisma entre católicos y protestantes. Emitió repetidas órdenes de celebrar rezos públicos en sus dominios «por la unión de la religión cristiana»; y cuando en 1562 el papa Pío IV aceptó volver a convocar el Concilio de Trento, Felipe acogió la decisión con entusiasmo porque «este es el último refugio en que la cristiandad espera hallar remedio para los males y divisiones que hay en la religión» y para reunir a católicos y protestantes. El rey llegó incluso a plantearse asistir a Trento en persona, como había hecho brevemente durante la segunda sesión: «Si pudiera ser, y el estado de nuestros negocios diera a ella el lugar, asistiéramos personalmente en el dicho concilio».[215]

Aunque esta vez se quedó en España, se esforzó por conseguir la asistencia del mayor número posible de prelados y teólogos de sus dominios. Durante toda la celebración del concilio, Felipe abrumó al papa con consejos sobre aspectos que él creía merecedores de mayor atención. Trató infructuosamente de prolongar la asamblea hasta que sus metas fueran resueltas; y, nada más concluir el concilio, Felipe ordenó a su embajador (aunque «con toda dissimulación y dexteridad y de manera que no les cause sombra ni recelo») que se opusiera a cualquier intento de remitir los decretos al papa para su confirmación antes de que pudieran ser ejecutados.[216]

El rey estaba preocupado por dos motivos distintos: sospechaba que Pío IV rechazaría o modificaría los decretos tridentinos y, además, temía que los utilizase como pretexto

para interferir en su patronato eclesiástico. Cuando en 1564 el papa autorizó la publicación y distribución de los decretos, Felipe emitió una pragmática que los apoyaba —convirtiéndose así en el primer monarca del mundo en hacerlo— pero sin mencionar la previa aprobación del papa. En su lugar, proclamaba que

> Nos, como rey obediente y verdadero hijo de la Iglesia, queriendo sanctificar y corresponder a la obligación en que somos, y siguiendo el ejemplo de los reyes nuestros antepasados […] hemos aceptado y recibido, y aceptamos y recibimos, el dicho sacrosancto concilio, y queremos que en nuestros reynos sea jurado, cumplido y executado; y daremos, para la dicha execución y cumplimiento y para la conservación y defensa de lo en él ordenado, nuestra ayuda y favor.

Felipe adjuntó una carta en la que informaba a cada prelado que, pese a su deseo de que «la aceptación y tenor» del concilio «sea así general», la ejecución de algunos decretos «podría traer inconveniente o perjuicio, así en respecto de las Iglesias y estado eclesiástico como por lo que toca a Su Magestad y a sus derechos y preeminencias».[217]

En abril de 1565, Felipe dio el último paso para asegurarse el control sobre las reformas tridentinas: firmó una cédula a cada arzobispo de España en la que les encargaba «convocar, juntar y celebrar» un concilio provincial a la primera oportunidad, tal y como Trento exigía, para promulgar los decretos. Sin embargo, la carta de convocatoria no solo se envió en su propio nombre, sino que reivindicaba el tradicional derecho de los reyes españoles a presidirlo: «No es necesaria nuestra asistencia personal en ese concilio [provincial, porque] con [un comisario] se puede conseguir el mismo efecto, además de que nuestras muchas y grandes ocupaciones lo impiden». Así pues, nombró a un comisario seglar para presidir cada concilio provincial y les ordenó que cambiaran cualquier cosa que no fuese de su agrado («Desea Su Magestad que el tiempo de […] residencia [episcopal] se alargase más de lo contenido en el Concilio de Trento») y que suprimieran la discusión de las

reformas que contradecían las leyes del reino (como en el decreto tridentino *De Reformatio*, en el que parecía «darse comisión para que los jueces eclesiásticos puedan proceder *contra legos* a ejecución de bienes y captura de personas, lo cual según las leyes de estos reinos y estilo y uso de ellos no se permite ni se ha de permitir»). Don Francisco de Toledo, el representante de Felipe ante el concilio metropolitano de Toledo (y futuro virrey del Perú), se jactaría más tarde de que siempre que «se trataba de la materia de los decretos de Trento, yo hacía mi apuntamiento con el advertimiento de Su Magestad» y añadía «en cada decreto los advertimientos de las instrucciones y cartas de Su Magestad». En resumen, informaba Toledo secamente, «hice poner el concilio de Trento en romance».[218]

Cuando Pío IV ignoró las peticiones de Felipe sobre la necesidad de introducir otras reformas en la Iglesia católica, este mandó a su representante en Roma que le recordara al papa «lo que toca a nuestra conciencia por el lugar en que Dios nos ha puesto, y cuydado que deuemos tener del bien de la religión en nuestros reinos» y que «no podemos, como padre y pastor destos pueblos, dexar de tener continuo cuydado y vigilancia sobre ello». Y cuando el nuevo pontífice, Pío V, también acabó ignorando sus demandas, el rey ordenó a su embajador en Roma que protestara «a solas de mi parte, que vayan sobre su consciencia, y no de la mía, los daños que de esta resultaren, de no remediar esto y de no creerme Su Santidad», una combinación de ruego y amenaza presente en muchas de las misivas de Felipe al papa.[219]

Mientras se enfrentaba al papa a causa de las reformas, Felipe proporcionaba una generosa financiación y una minuciosa dirección editorial a otra empresa «para la reunión de nuestra religión christiana»: la Biblia Políglota, publicada en ocho lujosos volúmenes en Amberes entre 1569 y 1573. La

supervisión de esta empresa se la encomendó al destacado humanista Benito Arias Montano, a quien instó a trabajar con teólogos luteranos y otros credos «sospechosos», dado que el rey esperaba que la publicación de unos textos consensuados en hebreo, griego, arameo y latín (Vulgata), con otra versión latina traducida directamente de los textos griegos y arameos, fuera del agrado de los cristianos protestantes y ortodoxos, así como de los católicos. El lema escogido para la empresa fue *pietatis concordiae* y la portada proclamaba abiertamente que iba «dirigida a la devoción y el estudio de la Sagrada Iglesia por Felipe II, el rey católico». Por si el mensaje no quedara suficientemente claro, en la segunda página se mostraba una figura femenina, la Religión, con un ejemplar de la nueva Biblia en una mano y un escudo con la insignia de Felipe en la otra. La figura estaba subida en un pedestal grabado con una inscripción en la que se reiteraba la iniciativa del rey de producir esta nueva herramienta para todos los cristianos [véase lámina 15] y [véase lámina 16].

Felipe II y el papado

Como es natural, estos esfuerzos unilaterales de Felipe II por reformar y reunir a la Iglesia cristiana ofendían a los papas. Gregorio XIII (1572-1585) declaró que ningún seglar podría presidir concilios provinciales en el futuro y, cuando Felipe II, no obstante, envió comisarios seglares a presidir otra serie de sínodos, Gregorio rechazó todos los decretos enviados para su aprobación, iniciando de este modo un enconado enfrentamiento: salvo en Tarragona, no volverían a reunirse más concilios provinciales en España en tres siglos. Tales ejemplos de intransigencia papal desconcertaron a Felipe. En 1581, por ejemplo, reflexionaba amargamente,

> es fuerte cosa que por ver que yo solo soy el que respeto a la Sede Apostólica, en lugar de agradecérmelo, como deurían, se aprovechan dello para quererme usurpar la autoridad que es tan necesaria y conveniente para el servicio de Dios y

para el buen gouierno de lo que Él me ha encomendado. Y es bien contrario desto lo que hazen con los que hazen lo contrario que yo.[220]

El desconcierto de Felipe provenía no solo de su convicción de que él podía interpretar los designios de Dios mejor que nadie, y de su precoz instrucción en estudios teológicos —la cual lo había convencido de que podía tenérselas con cualquier experto—, sino también de las pretensiones eclesiásticas de «los reyes nuestros antepasados», que habían reclamado actuar como «*rex et sacerdos*»: rey y sacerdote. Felipe rara vez vacilaba antes de sermonear a los papas sobre sus propios poderes y responsabilidades eclesiásticas. En su primera audiencia con Pío IV, solo cuatro días después de que este fuera elegido en 1559, el embajador español lanzó la escueta advertencia de que «mirase que en lo que Su Magestad ha metido la mano, no era menester tocar». Y si Pío y sus sucesores a pesar de todo decidían «tocar», Felipe recurría al chantaje y las amenazas para detenerles. Tres décadas más tarde, cuando Sixto V rechazó la petición del rey de iniciar una investigación, o visita, a la Compañía de Jesús en España, Felipe ordenó a su embajador que amenazase al papa con que si no actuaba, lo haría él mismo.

Si todavía, haviéndoos oído, y visto los memoriales, Su Beatitud estuviera con resolución de contrario parecer, de que la visita no se haga por el obispo [de Cartagena] ni por otros, le diréis que yo no le quiero hazer más instancia por la visita; antes procuraré que en mis reinos se ponga el remedio que pareciere más conveniente para atajar los daños que se temen.[221]

«No hay papa en España»

Al igual que todos los demás gobernantes españoles hasta 1976, un año después de la muerte de Franco, Felipe ostentaba amplios poderes eclesiásticos. El patronato real le dio el derecho de seleccionar personalmente a los obispos y abades, no solo en España, sino también en las Indias, los Países Bajos, Sicilia y Nápoles; y cuando accedió al trono de Portugal, adquirió poderes similares sobre todo el imperio luso. Cada vez que

quedaba vacante un cargo eclesiástico en sus dominios, el rey, «como patrón que soy de las iglesias», enviaba dos cartas a Roma. En la primera, ordenaba a su embajador que trasladara al papa las virtudes de su candidato y solicitara los instrumentos necesarios para el nombramiento, porque «será por él bien regida y governada, y mi conciencia descargada». En la segunda pedía al papa «darle [al embajador] entera fe y creencia, como a nuestra misma persona».[222] Estos nombramientos de altos cargos representaban solo una parte del patronato real: cada vez que nominaba a un prelado, Felipe también asignaba pensiones a otras personas hasta el valor acumulativo de un tercio sobre las mitras. Presentaba al papa cada año centenares de canónigos, deanes, priores y capellanes que él había elegido personalmente de las listas de candidatos preparadas por sus ministros de confianza. Dada la duración de su reinado y la extensión de sus dominios, Felipe nombró a muchas más personas eclesiásticas que cualquier otro gobernante, católico o protestante, de la época moderna.

¿A quiénes elegía? En una ocasión, Felipe se jactó ante el papa de que, en su función como patrón, «yo no pago con los obispados los servicios, sino que ando a sacar de las rincones los subjectos más apropósito para él de Nuestro Señor»; pero los indicios con que contamos no refrendan su afirmación. Por el contrario, un importante número de los candidatos de Felipe procedía de sus propios servidores. De los 194 obispos españoles que nombró, cuarenta y cinco habían sido inquisidores y otros cuatro, ministros. Igualmente, cuando presentaba sus candidatos a las pensiones sobre las mitras, Felipe favorecía de nuevo a sus servidores o a miembros de sus familias: así, entre las personas propuestas al papa para pensiones en 1578, se encontraba el hijo ilegítimo de un obispo que a su vez era hijo ilegítimo del emperador Maximiliano (bisabuelo de Felipe); cinco jueces reales; seis inquisidores;

catorce hijos, hermanos o sobrinos de ministros reales; veinticuatro capellanes y cuatro miembros del coro de las capillas de la familia real; y diecinueve hijos de otros miembros de la real casa, incluido el zapatero del rey y el cerero de la reina. Al parecer, Felipe utilizó su patronato eclesiástico para aumentar los salarios de sus propios empleados.[223]

Otra área en la que Felipe actuaba como «*rex et sacerdos*», siguiendo los pasos «de los reyes nuestros antepasados», era cuando usaba el *exequatur*, el derecho a invalidar cualquier iniciativa papal que la corona desaprobara. Los oficiales del rey utilizaban el *exequatur* para retrasar algunas bulas o instrucciones papales durante años, o devolverlas a Roma para que las redactaran de nuevo. Incluso los nuevos catecismo, misal y breviario emitidos por Pío V con el fin de proporcionar una liturgia universal para los católicos de todo el orbe suscitaron enérgicas protestas en Madrid. El papa publicó su nuevo catecismo, incorporando la doctrina aprobada por el Concilio de Trento, en 1566, y pronto llegaron algunos ejemplares a España, seguidos pocos meses más tarde de una licencia papal para preparar una traducción al español. En el intervalo, los teólogos de Felipe habían estudiado el nuevo catecismo detalladamente y encontrado en él doctrinas (a su parecer) criptoprotestantes, de modo que la Inquisición embargó el texto y prohibió su uso. La primera versión modificada del catecismo romano en latín no apareció en España hasta 1577, y su primera traducción vernácula —la única apta para ser leída por los españoles medios— no lo hizo hasta 1777.

Durante su reinado, Felipe trató de mantener a todos los enviados pontificios fuera de sus dominios. Poco después de su elección en 1566, Pío V decidió enviar comisiones de investigación a diferentes lugares del mundo católico, pero Felipe evitó que cualquiera de ellas entrara en España o en los

Países Bajos. Luego, alarmado por los informes de abusos clericales en las Indias, el papa consideró la conveniencia de nombrar un nuncio para América. Cuando Felipe indicó que no lo permitiría, Pío respondió creando una «congregación» de cardenales para que propusiera soluciones, y envió entusiasmado sus recomendaciones a España; pero Felipe también las rechazó. El control de Madrid sobre la Iglesia americana continuó siendo absoluto e inexpugnable. La situación era muy parecida en los demás dominios de la monarquía de Felipe. Pío V se quejó en una ocasión de «que en Çiçilia él no tenía más que hacer que en Alemania, porque quando provehía alguna cosa hallava allá otro Pío Quinto puesto por la Monarquía que le rrevocava». Su queja cayó en oídos sordos. Felipe replicó sin rodeos al papa que «en aquellas cosas que yo tengo, y mis passados me han dexado, no ha de haver mudança». O, como reza la célebre frase pronunciada por el Consejo de Castilla durante una discusión sobre dicha jurisdicción: «No hay papa en España».[224]

¿Imperialismo mesiánico?

Esta disputa permanente entre Roma y Madrid, incluso sobre asuntos relativamente menores, era el reflejo de dos visiones geopolíticas incompatibles. Los papas temían a Felipe, pese a su evidente piedad religiosa, porque sus dominios rodeaban los Estados Pontificios tanto por el norte como por el sur. En mayo de 1527, el mes de su nacimiento, las tropas de su padre saquearon Roma y encarcelaron al papa; treinta años más tarde, las fuerzas del propio Felipe bombardearon la Ciudad Santa. Aunque sus tropas se retiraron tras firmar la paz, Felipe mantenía una gran influencia sobre Roma. Cubría de beneficios y pensiones a los cardenales simpatizantes de su causa —en 1591, cuarenta y siete de los setenta cardenales se embolsaban una pensión de España— y proveía a la ciudad de

grano y vino de Sicilia siempre que era necesario. A petición del papa, le proporcionó galeras para defenderse de los corsarios y en una ocasión envió tropas para sofocar una revuelta por motivos fiscales. También intentaba impedir la elección como pontífice de candidatos «perniciosos o que no nos convenían», empezando en 1559, cuando murió Paolo IV. Durante casi cuatro meses, el embajador Francisco de Vargas luchó por conseguir la elección de un papa hispanófilo, o al menos no francófilo. Felipe nunca intervino tan directamente hasta los cónclaves de 1590-1592, cuando amenazaba con retirar los envíos de grano desde Sicilia a Roma, y en una ocasión hizo avanzar sus tropas y galeras hasta la frontera de los Estados Pontificios a fin de influir sobre los cardenales.

Algunos papas contraatacaron. Paulo IV excomulgó y declaró la guerra a Felipe *(véase capítulo 3)* y Gregorio XIII trató de impedir la unión de España y Portugal, provocando un furibundo arranque de ira en el ultrajado rey:

> Muy sancto padre: El amor y respecto que a Vuestra Santidad he tenido, nadie mejor que Vuestra Santidad lo sabe. Los trabajos que en su pontificado han passado por mis estados también son públicos; y que los más dellos han sido por aver yo tomado tan a pechos la defensa de la Iglesia y extirpar las heregías. Pero como quanto más estos han ydo cresciendo, más olvido ha mostrado Vuestra Santidad dellos, no puedo dexar de maravillarme.[225]

Pero el «olvido» papal de los «trabajos» soportados por Felipe continuaba. En la década de 1590, Clemente VIII rechazó la reivindicación de los derechos a la corona francesa presentada por la hija de Felipe, Isabel Clara Eugenia, en favor de su acérrimo rival, Enrique de Borbón. En los Países Bajos, Felipe se quejaba, no sin razón, de que los papas permanecieran indiferentes, por no decir hostiles, respecto de su lucha por recuperar y recatolizar las provincias rebeldes. Según le manifestaba al cardenal Granvela, para «que tan bien lo entendéis todo… Creo que si los Estados Baxos fueran de otro, uvieran hecho maravillas porque no se perdiera la religión en

ellos; y por ser míos creo que passan, porque se pierda la religión en ellos a trueque de que los pierda yo».[226] La reflexión no dejaba de ser perspicaz y bien argumentada, pero pasaba por alto el hecho de que tanto la extensión de los dominios del rey como su retórica mesiánica desafiaban la ideología papal.

El mesianismo de Felipe II mostraba muchas características comunes a todas las demás visiones providenciales de su época, como el cumplimiento de profecías que predecían un cambio global, agitación y, finalmente, la unificación; un mito «fundacional» que presentaba su monarquía como algo nuevo en la historia del mundo; y el supuesto de que el «Mesías» podía discernir el propósito de Dios y perseguir las políticas adecuadas para alcanzarlo mejor que nadie. Cabe recordar que el viaje de Felipe por los Países Bajos en 1549 estuvo acompañado de numerosas visiones bíblicas *(véase capítulo 2)*. La magnífica vidriera encargada por el rey, en 1557, para la iglesia de San Juan de Gouda, en Holanda, también reflejaba el mesianismo de Felipe. En la parte superior, Salomón aparece orando en la inauguración de su templo y la voz de Dios responde: «He escuchado tu plegaria y si tú caminas por mis senderos como hizo tu padre, yo perpetuaré tu trono por siempre». En la sección central, Cristo preside la Última Cena y habla con el apóstol Felipe, cuya mano descansa con gesto protector sobre el hombro de su regio tocayo, arrodillado a su lado, en actitud de adoración, con su esposa María Tudor a su lado [véase lámina 17].

La visión mesiánica de Felipe tendría consecuencias de muy largo alcance. Sobre todo, su absoluta certeza de que estaba cumpliendo los mandatos de Dios a veces le hacía poco realista en lo tocante a la política. Por un lado, el rey a menudo se negaba a diseñar planes de contingencia porque, si Dios luchaba del lado de España, cualquier intento de prever un posible fracaso podía interpretarse como síntoma de falta de fe.

Por otro, solía ignorar cualquier sugerencia de sus subordinados respecto a la falta de realismo de sus órdenes, ya que, una vez más, ellos no eran capaces de entender que, en caso de necesidad, Dios proveería.

El impacto de una estrategia tan basada en la fe se aprecia con la máxima claridad en sus relaciones con Inglaterra. El hecho de que «haver sido yo rey de aquel reyno, en que Dios fue servido que ya una vez por mi medio y por mi mano se restituyese la religión católica», le hacía todavía menos proclive a escuchar estrategias alternativas. Por ejemplo, en 1570, Felipe ordenó al duque de Alba, su gobernador general en los Países Bajos, que preparara y dirigiera una invasión para destronar a la protestante Isabel Tudor y reemplazarla por su prima católica, María Estuardo. El rey reconocía que

> aunque la prudencia humana nos represente muchos inconvenientes y dificultades, y nos ponga delante mundanos temores, la sabiduría cristiana y la confianza que en la causa de Dios, con razón, havemos de tener, las allana y nos anima y esfuerça para pasar por todo. Y cierto no podríamos dexar de quedar con gran escrúpulo en nuestro ánimo y con gran lástima, si por faltar yo a aquella reyna [María Estuardo] y a aquellos católicos, o por mejor dezir a la religión, ellos padesciesen y ella se perdiese.

Alba protestó que esa sería una guerra equivocada, en el lugar equivocado y en el momento equivocado, añadiendo con evidente ironía:

> Como quiera que el principal medio debe venir de Dios, como Vuestra Magestad muy virtuosa y santamente propone, todavía, considerando que Él obra ordinariamente por los medios que da a los hombres, paresce necesario examinar qué medios son necesarios para esecutar su intención.

Y esos «medios», aseguraba Alba con firmeza, no existían. [227]

Durante algún tiempo, el rey desistió, pero durante su primera visita prolongada a El Escorial en el verano de 1571, volvió a la carga, e informó a Alba de que, dado que María Estuardo era «la verdadera y legitima subçessora» al trono inglés, «que la Isabel lo posee con tiranía», con la intervención

de solo 6.000 soldados veteranos procedentes de los Países Bajos, encabezados por el duque en persona, sería «fácil matar o prender a la Isabel y poner en libertad, y en la posesión del reyno, a la de Scocia». Sin duda consciente de que todo aquello le parecería poco realista a su lugarteniente, Felipe añadió que «Dios […] en causa tan suya, nos alumbraría, ayudaría y asistiría con su braço y mano poderosa para que se açertase».[228]

Los consejeros que llevaban años al servicio de Felipe se quedaron atónitos ante tan ilimitado y acrítico entusiasmo. «Estraña cosa es quan de veras Su Magestad está en lo de Ingalaterra», escribió el doctor Martín de Velasco a un colega, añadiendo: «Cierto, ni he visto ni pudiera creer quán caliente está Su Magestad en este negocio». Pocos días después, Velasco repetía que «cierto, yo no he visto al rey con tanto fuego en negocio de ninguna qualidad que sea». Incluso el conde de Feria, exembajador de Felipe en Inglaterra y en aquel momento principal partidario de una invasión, admitía que «está Su Magestad tan ferviente en estos negocios de Inglaterra que ya yo me puedo tener por flegmático en ellos».[229]

Su «fervor» llevó a Felipe a intentar involucrar a Alba en su plan con otro alarde de retórica mesiánica. «No se puede negar que en este negocio ocurran muchas y grandes dificultades, y que errándose se incurría en no pequeños inconvenientes», concedió, pero:

> No embargante todo esto, deseo yo tanto el efecto deste tratado, y he entrado en una tal confianza de Dios nuestro Señor, a cuyo servicio esto se endereza, sin tener yo otro fin particular, que lo guiará y encaminará; y tengo por tan precisas delante de Dios las obligaciones que para esto yo tengo, que estoy muy determinado y resuelto de proceder y asistir a esta causa.

Una vez más, Alba se mantuvo impasible. Respondió al chantaje moral del rey con una barrera de objeciones de índole práctica, y concluyó: «Yo, como tengo dicho a Vuestra Magestad, no he comenzado a hacer prevención ninguna».[230]

Este diálogo de sordos solo acabó cuando Alba descubrió que Isabel ya conocía los planes del rey y había puesto a María Estuardo bajo estrecha vigilancia y arrestado al principal conspirador inglés.

Estos fracasos no cambiaron en absoluto la estrategia de Felipe, quien continuó utilizando el chantaje mesiánico para persuadir a sus lugartenientes de que, por desesperada que fuera la situación, Dios proveería. Así, en 1585, informaba al duque de Parma, el sucesor de Alba como gobernador general de los Países Bajos:

> Espero en Nuestro Señor, por cuyo servicio se ha hecho y se sustenta esta guerra [en Flandes] a costa de tanta sangre y dinero (todo bien empleado en tal causa) que ordenara las cosas con su divina providencia, mediante la negociación o las armas, de manera que conozca el mundo, en el buen successo del negocio, el fructo de confiar en Él, llevando siempre delante esta firme resolución, y quando fuesse servido de otra cosa por nuestros peccados, vale más consumirlo todo en defensa de su causa y servicio, que por ningún otro respecto faltar un solo punto a Él.

Dos años después, cuando su almirante más experimentado se quejó de los peligros que implicaba navegar hacia Inglaterra en noviembre, como Felipe proponía, el rey replicó serenamente: «Bien se vee que es harto aventurar navegar con gran armada de invierno, y más por aquel canal y sin tener puerto cierto», pero «el tiempo, Dios (cuya es la causa) se hará de esperar que le dará bueno de Su mano». Más tarde, después de que una tormenta hubiera dañado algunas naves de la Gran Armada, empujado a otras hacia La Coruña y desperdigado el resto, el rey tranquilizó a su desanimado comandante:

> Que a ser esta una guerra injusta, pudiera tomarse esta tormenta por señal de la voluntad de Nuestro Señor para desistir de su offensa; mas siendo tan justa como es, no se deve creer que la ha de desamparar, sino de favorescer mejor que se puede dessear […]. Yo tengo ofrecido a Dios este servicio […]. Alentaos, pues, a lo que os toca.[231]

De vez en cuando, una catástrofe podía minar la confianza del rey. Cuando se enteraba de las dimensiones del desastre de

la Armada, en noviembre de 1588, Felipe le confió a su secretario:

> Yo os prometo que si no se vencen [estas dificultades] y se da forma en lo que tanto es menester, que muy presto nos habremos de ver en cosa que no querríamos ser nacidos. Yo a lo menos por no verla. Si Dios no haze milagro (que así espero en Él), que antes que esto sea, me ha de llevar para sí, como yo se lo pido, por no ver tanta mala ventura y desdicha.

Sin embargo, estos momentos de duda sobre la congruencia del «servicio de Dios y el mío» eran infrecuentes y poco duraderos. A lo largo de la década de 1590, Felipe siempre insistía en que «no ha podido, ni puedo, faltar» a sus costosas guerras «por tener tan precisa obligación para con Dios y el mundo de acudir a ellas». Unos meses después, cuando uno de sus ministros hizo una vehemente súplica para reducir el gasto militar en Francia, los Países Bajos y el Atlántico, Felipe le recordó que «no son materias estas para poder descuydar dellas» por «ir lo que va de la religión en ello, que se ha de posponer a todo».[232]

El mesianismo de Felipe II en su contexto

La visión mesiánica de Felipe sobrevivía, en parte, porque la mayoría de sus ministros y vasallos la compartían. A comienzos del reinado, un tratado escrito por el teólogo Bartolomé Torres, que había estado al servicio de Felipe en Inglaterra, resaltaba el vínculo «*rex et sacerdos*»:

> Los prínçipes, en cuanto prínçipes, en alguna manera son curas de almas; porque, si los consideramos en quanto proueen curados i obispos, son obligados a procurar el bien de las almas elligiendo aquellos que meior tracten el negotio spiritual […]. Los prínçipes han de dar cuenta a Dios a la hora de la muerte i en el día del juizio, no solo de sí, sino de todo su reino i de todos los daños i males que, por su floxedad i negligentia, se hazen.

Los poetas también sacralizaban la causa de su monarca. En la década de 1570, la *Canción por la victoria de Lepanto* de Fernando de Herrera establecía un paralelismo con el hundimiento del ejército del faraón en el mar Rojo; *La Austriada* de Juan Rufo (1584), un poema épico sobre don

Juan de Austria, aclamaba al rey como «el pastor de Dios en la tierra»; y según el soneto de Hernando de Acuña titulado *Al rey nuestro señor*, publicado en 1591:

> Ya se acerca, señor, o ya es llegada
> la edad gloriosa en que promete el cielo
> una grey y un pastor solo en el suelo,
> por suerte a vuestros tiempos reservada.
> […]
> Y anuncia al mundo, para más consuelo,
> un monarca, un imperio y una espada.[233]

Los artistas católicos también relacionaban explícitamente los logros del rey con el favor divino «ganado» por su entrega al servicio de Dios. Muchas obras de arte producidas durante la vida de Felipe le retrataban en comunión directa con Dios [véase lámina 18] y [véase lámina 19]. En *Felipe II ofreciendo al cielo al infante don Fernando* (1573), también llamado *Ofrenda de Felipe II*, Tiziano inmortaliza al rey mientras este dedica ostentosamente a su hijo recién nacido a Dios en agradecimiento por la victoria de Lepanto [véase lámina 31]; en *El sueño de Felipe II* del Greco (1579), el rey se arrodilla confiado a esperar su destino el día del Juicio Final; y en un grabado flamenco de 1585, Jesús concede directamente la insignia del poder a Felipe mientras el papa le mira con envidia. En el retrato tal vez más conocido del rey, realizado por Sofonisba Anguissola, aquel sostiene un rosario —como si la artista le hubiera sorprendido durante sus rezos—, mientras que las imponentes esculturas funerarias de Pompeo Leoni muestran a Felipe y su familia rezando junto al altar mayor en la basílica de El Escorial.

La música también sostenía las pretensiones mesiánicas de Felipe. Al menos dos misas fueron cantadas en su honor. Hacia 1560 Bartolomé de Escobedo compuso la primera, para seis voces, con la frase «PHILIPPUS REX HISPANIAE» yuxtapuesta con la liturgia:

Gloria in excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
philippus rex hispaniae…
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini
philippus rex hispaniae
Osanna in excelsis.

En 1596 Philippe Rogier, maestro de la capilla flamenca de Felipe, terminó su *Missa Philippus Secundus Rex Hispaniae* para cuatro o seis voces, y la Imprenta Real la publicó dos años después. Otros músicos alababan a su soberano: Fernando de las Infantas, por ejemplo, compuso un motete para seis voces rogando la ayuda de san Jerónimo para su «piísimo siervo» Felipe, y para otros miembros de la familia real.[234]

El hecho de que su familia y sus ministros compartieran y apoyaran su visión mesiánica también reforzaba el convencimiento de Felipe. Entre los miembros de la primera, su hermana Juana profesó los votos simples de pobreza, castidad y obediencia exigidos a todos los novicios de la orden jesuita *(véase capítulo 9)*; e incluso su belicoso medio hermano don Juan de Austria invocaba la intervención divina. En 1576, al terminar una carta a otro ilustre militar, don García de Toledo, en la que explicaba su misión en Flandes, citó a Dios dos veces: «Al fin, Dios ha de tomar por de todo punto suya esta causa y ayudarme a mí propiamente con [un] milagro». Pocos días después, en una carta a su medio hermana, Margarita de Parma, don Juan esperaba que Dios «a mí me ayude con milagros, pues si no fuere haziéndolos, no sé cómo se pueda volver en vida un cuerpo con el último suspiro en boca».[235] Ruy Gómez de Silva, un aliado tanto de Juana como de don Juan, informó en 1559 al general de los jesuitas de «quán afficionado soy a su religión, y que por este respecto desseo que aya un collegio della en Mélito», su nuevo feudo napolitano. Una década más tarde, Ruy Gómez y su esposa, la princesa de

Éboli, «hicieron muy buen acogimiento» a Teresa de Ávila cuando llegó como invitada para tratar «de la fundación de los monasterios de Pastrana, ansí de frailes como de monjas».[236] En 1568, don Francés de Álava, el embajador de Felipe en Francia, afirmó categóricamente que «si yo he de ser instrumento para que las cosas humanas se prefieren a las divinas, antes Dios me saque de este mundo». La masacre de San Bartolomé de 1572 dejó impresionado incluso al escéptico duque de Alba como clara prueba de los esfuerzos de Dios en la defensa de su propia causa y la de España; así de eufórico se manifestaba en una carta al conde de Bossu:

> Los acontecimientos de París y Francia son maravillosos y ciertamente demuestran que Dios ha tenido a bien cambiar y replantear las cosas de la forma que Él sabe favorecerá a la verdadera iglesia y promoverá su sagrada labor y su gloria. Y, por otra parte, dada la actual situación, estos hechos no podrían haberse producido en mejor momento para los intereses de Nuestro Señor, por lo que nunca podremos estar lo bastante agradecidos a la bondad divina.[237]

Aun Antonio Pérez, un ministro famoso por su vida disoluta, participó en una romería en 1575, y poco después, mientras organizaba la salida de don Juan de Austria de Italia a Flandes, escribió al rey con gran satisfacción «que cosa tan del servicio de Dios y de Vuestra Magestad —que es todo uno— va bien hasta agora». En 1584, el conde de Barajas, presidente del Consejo Real, expresó la esperanza «que preceden» a todas otras consideraciones «lo que es el servicio de Dios y de Su Magestad»; y tres años más tarde, don Juan de Idiáquez, secretario de Estado, instaba a Felipe a mantenerse firme en su plan de invadir Inglaterra a pesar del coste:

> Será tan açepto servicio a Nuestro Señor que no es possible que Su mano, assí en la execución desta obra como en todo lo demás después della, no muestre en Vuestra Magestad y sus cosas visiblemente como paga a quien assí le serve, y creo que es obligación servirle cada uno conforme a sus fuerças, pues las fuerças Él las da por quien es, y da las pudiendo quitarlas. Y en Vuestra Magestad muestra tanto su poder y favor que se puede tomar esto por prenda cierta del suçesso de todo lo que se emprendiere por serle agradezcido.[238]

Lógicamente, los numerosos servidores eclesiásticos del rey expresaban con frecuencia ideas similares. En 1574, Mateo Vázquez consolaba a su amo, desanimado por la situación en los Países Bajos, diciéndole que Dios

> siempre mira a Vuestra Magestad, y en las mayores necessidades con mayores demostraciones —lo de San Quentín, lo de la mar contra el enemigo común [Lepanto], y lo de Granada— todo succedió muy bien […]. Son señales que prometten grande sperança en todo. Y pues Vuestra Magestad defiende la causa de Dios, Él defenderá, como siempre lo ha hecho, lo que toca a Vuestra Magestad.

Cuatro años después, cuando llegaron las noticias de la desastrosa derrota y muerte en África del rey Sebastián de Portugal, sobrino de Felipe, Vázquez insistió en que pronto «Dios bolverá por su causa, y dará a Vuestra Magestad mucha vida, pues le tiene por instrumento para que se la defiende; y Vuestra Magestad sabe muy bien que de grandes trabajos y aflictiones acostumbra su divina providencia sacar felicíssimos sucesos».[239] Juan de Ovando, inquisidor y presidente del Consejo de Indias, compartía el mismo punto de vista. Al preguntarle si el nombramiento de presidente del Consejo de Hacienda podía suponerle una carga excesiva, respondió con palabras que recordaban a las del propio rey: «Esta se podrá vencer con mi trabajo y salud, que yo tengo sacrificado al servicio de vuestra magestad, por serlo también de Dios». En 1583, la noticia de que la Armada española había conquistado la isla Tercera llevó al cardenal Granvela a exclamar que con «tantas gracias y favores que nos haze su Divina bondad, nos obligan a mirar mucho por Su causa, y a procurar de librar tantas almas del lazo del demonio, assí en Flandes como en otras partes, y tanto más que haziendo Su negotio, hazemos el nuestro».[240]

Así pues, un notable consenso mesiánico existía entre Felipe y los soldados, artistas, propagandistas y ministros a su servicio. Esto reforzaba inevitablemente la confianza del rey en sí mismo

en detrimento del desarrollo de estrategias alternativas y más flexibles. Pero ¿existían estrategias alternativas? Felipe había heredado territorios tan alejados que, en efecto, eran indefendibles: España y gran parte de Italia, las Américas y los Países Bajos. La incorporación de las Filipinas después de 1565 y del Imperio portugués después de 1580 agravó aún más este insostenible «crecimiento estratégico». Como afirmó Tommaso Campanella, agudo observador de la política, poco después de la muerte del rey: «La Monarquía española se funda en la oculta providencia de Dios más que en la prudencia», y él, como muchos otros, veía la historia de España como una heroica progresión en la que los milagros compensaban los desastres (como la conquista musulmana del 711 y el fracaso de la Armada en 1588) a medida que España continuaba su avance, desigual pero dispuesto por Dios, hacia el dominio universal. [241] Hasta la década de 1590, era posible creer que un éxito espectacular compensaría siempre cada derrota: contra el fracaso de su plan para destronar a Isabel en 1570-1571, Felipe podía contraponer la victoria de Lepanto (que terminar con la amenaza turca) y la masacre de San Bartolomé (que pareció había asestado un golpe definitivo al protestantismo en Francia). Sus pérdidas en los Países Bajos se vieron sobradamente compensadas por su acceso al trono de Portugal y por sus posesiones de ultramar, creando el primer imperio de la Historia «en que no se ponía el sol».

Sin embargo, como Carl von Clausewitz escribió en el siglo XIX —en su magistral libro *Sobre la guerra*—, todas las estrategias son llevadas a cabo por individuos, entre los que «el menos importante puede hacer por casualidad que las cosas se retrasen o marchen mal de alguna manera». Para explicar las dificultades experimentadas por los generales, Clausewitz se apropió de un concepto de la ciencia, la fricción, que abarcaba todos aquellos factores que impiden que las órdenes se

desarrollen como está previsto: «Incontables incidentes menores, cuya naturaleza los hace imposibles de prever, se combinan para reducir el éxito general de una actuación, de modo que su resultado siempre queda lejos del objetivo perseguido».[242] Pero el imperialismo mesiánico de Felipe no aceptaba que los asuntos humanos tienden a ser desordenados y que las desviaciones resultado del azar requieren una corrección constante. En su lugar, cada vez que su filosofía de «*suma ratio pro religione*» generaba objetivos imposibles y un alcance estratégico insostenible, el rey adoptaba formas de evasión: por un lado, se preguntaba cómo podría convencer a Dios para que obrara un milagro; y por otro, buscaba refugio en el mundo de las delicias que había creado alrededor de su corte.

6. El rey se divierte

Mateo Vázquez, cuya posición dual como capellán y secretario del rey le otorgaba una situación única para conocer los más profundos sentimientos y emociones de Felipe, comentó —en una carta a Juan Fernández de Espinosa, banquero y ministro real— que «los reyes tienen gusto y voluntad como otros hombres, y más que ellos con la potençia, que es mayor que la de los súbditos y vassallos, y que cada día se mudan muchas cosas y muchas condiciones y voluntades, y que es menester mirar cómo está todo, y caminar por donde se pueda y convenga».[243] La «potencia» del rey para conseguir su «gusto y voluntad» hizo que esto fuera aún más remarcable, pues, al menos tras su regreso a España en 1559, se dedicaría a ello prácticamente sin cambios durante el resto de su vida.

El viajero compulsivo

Aunque Felipe hizo de Madrid su capital administrativa en 1561, nunca dejó de viajar. Residió en sus posesiones aragonesas en 1563-1564, 1585-1586 y 1592; en 1570 viajó por Andalucía; y en 1580 se marchó a Portugal y no regresó a Madrid hasta pasados tres años. Como señaló el historiador Teófilo Ruiz, estos largos viajes reales implicaban enormes preparativos y agotadores espectáculos urbanos que a menudo dejaban al rey exhausto, todos ellos «inseparablemente unidos al ejercicio y la experiencia del poder».[244] En otros casos, Felipe solía realizar sus desplazamientos de un palacio a otro a solas, o con un séquito muy reducido, buscando tranquilidad. «Su quietud», escribió el embajador de Venecia en 1565, «es el mayor entretenimiento y la mayor recreación que Su Magestad tiene». «Le complace maravillosamente la vida solitaria», confirmaba su sucesor en 1571, añadiendo que el rey pasaba su tiempo en sus «lugares de placer, con infinito contento de su

ánimo». En 1593, otro diplómatico veneciano repitió que Felipe «es amigo de la soledad: le complacen los lugares desiertos».[245]

Cuatro de las casas de campo del rey le permitían acomodarse en un entorno incomparable: El Pardo (adonde el rey acudía con regularidad a cazar, especialmente en otoño), Aranjuez (de cuyos espectaculares jardines disfrutaba en primavera) y el Bosque de Segovia (lugar excelente para la caza y la pesca). Sobre todo, a partir de 1571, el rey fue prolongando sus periodos de estancia en San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial, construido en cumplimiento de su promesa, formulada tras la victoria de San Quintín en 1557, de erigir un importante monumento en honor del santo en cuyo día se había librado y ganado la batalla *(véase capítulo 3)*. Con el tiempo, el complejo acabaría sirviendo como mausoleo dinástico, monasterio, seminario y biblioteca, así como palacio real.[⇒]

Los traslados del rey entre sus diversas residencias eran tan regulares y frecuentes que un miembro de su corte escribió un librito titulado *Los grandes y admirables viages del rey don Felipe II*, que decía: «El viage de Madrid al Pardo, del Pardo al Escurial, del Escurial al Pardo, del Pardo a Madrid, de Madrid a Aranjuez…», y así, de folio en folio, hasta llenar el volumen.[246] Pero la mofa no hacía justicia a la cantidad de asuntos que leía y resolvía durante estos «grandes y admirables viajes». Así, el 3 de octubre de 1572 —según el *Diurnal* que escribía su secretario particular, Antonio Gracián y Dantisco—, tras una breve estancia en El Escorial, «Su Majestad partió después de comer y fuimos a dormir a La Despernada», como se conocía entonces a Villanueva de la Cañada. Al día siguiente, en «La Despernada, llegó correo con despachos de Zayas [secretario de Estado, Norte], dos de Gaztelu [Órdenes], Antonio Pérez [Estado, Sur] y Eraso [Indias]. Vino Su Majestad a comer a la dehesa de Romanillos […]. Esa noche vino Su Majestad al

Pardo y despach[ó] el correo con despachos para Gaztelu, Antonio Pérez y Juan Vázquez [Cámara]». Felipe pasó las siguientes cuarenta y ocho horas en El Pardo, donde recibió y respondió a los despachos de ocho ministros diferentes antes de regresar a Madrid.[247]

El proceso de crear su red de palacios obligó al rey a vivir durante mucho tiempo rodeado de obras, sobre las que decidía personalmente: durante su reinado, Felipe intervino en más de cien proyectos de arquitectura, como se puede ver con un simple vistazo a los ocho libros de registros de la Junta de Obras y Bosques, con más de 3.000 folios llenos de cédulas reales emitidas entre 1556 y 1598 para los reales sitios de Castilla. Aunque nunca diseñó un programa arquitectónico global, el rey actuaba como su propio «maestro de obras», tomando una serie casi infinita de decisiones *ad hoc* que le permitían mantener todo bajo su riguroso control personal.

La falta de un programa global no implicaba que careciera de una visión de conjunto. Las enseñanzas de su preceptor Honorato Juan, y el detallado estudio de los libros de Vitruvio, Serlio y otros autores de su biblioteca, todos los cuales incluían espléndidas ilustraciones de edificios italianos y romanos, habían proporcionado al joven príncipe un sólido conocimiento de la arquitectura; y sus viajes por Italia, Alemania y los Países Bajos le habían permitido ver y apreciar algunos de los estilos más destacados. A todo esto se debía su sublime confianza en que él podía mejorar cualquier plan diseñado por sus arquitectos [véase lámina 20]. En cuanto regresó a España en 1551, comenzó a emitir órdenes dirigidas a reconfigurar los palacios reales de Castilla y sus jardines «a la manera de Flandes», con muros de ladrillo rojo y tejados de pizarra negra, rodeados de jardines pulcros y verdes, arroyos y estanques; y tras su partida de Flandes en 1559, ordenó a Granvela que enviara cubridores de pizarra y albañiles de los

Países Bajos para construir edificios de estilo flamenco; cantores para su capilla flamenca; ingenieros hidráulicos para construir arroyos y lagos artificiales; y jardineros para cuidar las plantas igualmente traídas desde Flandes.

Antes de salir de Bruselas, el rey tomó otra importante decisión esencial para la creación de un «estilo Felipe II» uniforme: invitó a Juan Bautista de Toledo, que había trabajado con Miguel Ángel en la basílica de San Pedro de Roma y realizado destacados proyectos de construcción en Nápoles, para que se reuniera con él en España, y luego declaró que «agora y de aquí adelante para en toda vuestra vida seáis nuestro arquitecto». El planteamiento era nuevo: los predecesores de Felipe habían nombrado un maestro concreto para cada obra, pero, a partir de entonces, todos respondían ante Toledo. El rey le ordenó residir en la corte y «hacer las trazas y modelos que os mandáremos, en todas nuestras obras, edificios y otras cosas dependientes del dicho oficio de arquitecto». Para este fin, Toledo creó un «estudio» en el Alcázar de Madrid donde formaba a sus ayudantes en preparar las trazas —los planos— que se utilizaban habitualmente en Italia para las construcciones importantes. Además, Felipe hizo frecuentes viajes para ver el progreso de cada obra. Así, cuando regresó a Castilla en 1564 después de una larga estancia en Aragón, no «quedó en el mismo lugar dos días enteros, en vez iba con un pequeño séquito a visitar todos sus casas en los alrededores [de Madrid], uno por uno».[248]

Todo podría haber ido bien si Felipe no hubiera nombrado a Toledo maestro mayor en El Escorial, el Alcázar de Madrid, Aranjuez y El Pardo, además de ordenarle que preparara trazas para todos ellos y para otros varios reales sitios. Inevitablemente, Toledo iba retrasado en sus tareas, lo que enfurecía a su amo. En la primavera de 1565, el rey comentó: «Lo que yo creo es que de pura pereça, y ser floxo y tardío, lo

dexa de hazer, y no de malicia, porque quando él quiere, hasta aquello bien lo sabe hazer». Pero, añadía Felipe malhumorado, «si él no se da más priesa, no es posible que entienda en tantas obras». Unos meses más tarde, cuando Toledo se había retrasado aún más, el rey explotó ante su secretario: «Ya veis que sería vergüenza, a lo menos, suya que en lugar de acabarlo todo, como pensé primero, y lo tenía ordenado hasta arriba con necesarios y todo, no acabasen agora esto que no es aún la mytad». El arquitecto permaneció impasible: «Los edificios son como plantas: solamente crecen si son regados, y el agua que necesitan es el dinero». Esto apaciguó un poco al rey: «Bien filosofea aquí sobre la falta del dinero», comentó a regañadientes mientras le facilitaba más fondos.[249] A pesar de estos desacuerdos, y de la interferencia del rey, cuando le llegó la muerte, en 1567, Toledo había determinado el diseño general tanto de Aranjuez, El Escorial y El Pardo como, en Madrid, del Alcázar, el Cuarto Real de San Jerónimo, las Descalzas Reales y la Casa de Campo.

Felipe tomó entonces otra decisión extraordinaria: dejó vacantes los puestos de «arquitecto de Su Magestad» y «maestro mayor de las obras reales». En su lugar, se sirvió de un hombre con unas impresionantes dotes como dibujante técnico, pero casi sin ninguna experiencia práctica como arquitecto: Juan de Herrera. Nacido en una modesta familia de hidalgos asturiana, Herrera había acompañado a Felipe en su «felicísimo viaje», y más tarde había servido como soldado, primero en Italia y después como miembro de la Guarda Alemana que acompañaba al rey, antes de trabajar como ayudante de Honorato Juan. En 1563 Felipe le nombró «trazador» de Juan Bautista de Toledo, con quien preparó destacadas obras en los alcázares de Toledo y Segovia, la Alhambra de Granada y otros edificios, incluido El Escorial, la más audaz y ambiciosa expresión del «estilo Felipe II», y también la única que continúa

intacta.

Construir la octava maravilla del mundo

Al principio, el rey pensó en cumplir su promesa a san Lorenzo ampliando uno de los conventos reales ya existentes, perteneciente a los jerónimos, la orden contemplativa en cuya casa de Yuste su padre había encontrado consuelo y vivido sus últimos días. El César había especificado en su testamento que debía ser enterrado junto a su esposa en la Capilla Real de Granada y, al enterarse de su muerte, Felipe ordenó que se trasladara el cadáver de su padre a esa ciudad, donde ya estaban enterrados su madre y sus dos hermanos pequeños (Fernando y Juan) así como su primera esposa (María Manuela). Probablemente debido a la escasez de dinero, esto no se hizo, y justo antes de abandonar los Países Bajos, Felipe ordenó que el cuerpo de Carlos permaneciera en Yuste, para que él personalmente pudiera supervisar su reentierro «con la autoridad y decencia que desseamos» tras su regreso a España. El rey ya había decidido una ampliación importante de su plan original para honrar a san Lorenzo: crear un mausoleo para su familia.[250]

Felipe invirtió ocho meses en recopilar una lista de los lugares más apropiados para el enterramiento de su padre (y también de otros cuerpos reales) en un nuevo convento que se llamaría «San Lorenzo de la Victoria». En abril de 1561 informó al padre general de la orden de San Jerónimo que «brevemente pienso tornar a ver los sitios que hasta ahora se han visitado y platicado, para resolver en cuál de ellos se han de fundar». Dos meses más tarde, el rey tomó su decisión: construiría «su» monasterio jerónimo en las estribaciones del Guadarrama, cerca del pueblo de El Escorial, a unos cuarenta y cinco kilómetros al noroeste de su nueva capital en Madrid, lo bastante alejado para que fuera un lugar de retiro. Solicitó la

aprobación del general de la orden, quien respondió obsequiosamente que los «padres están muy contentos del sitio que Vuestra Magestad tiene escogido, que me dicen ser muy bueno y que tiene todas las partes que ha de tener cualquier buen sitio, y bastaba para serlo haberlo escogido Vuestra Magestad». Solo sugirió un pequeño cambio: que en lugar de San Lorenzo de la Victoria, la nueva fundación se llamara San Lorenzo el Real. Felipe estuvo de acuerdo.[251]

En 1562 el rey visitó el lugar en dos ocasiones acompañado por Juan Bautista de Toledo, «que ya a este tiempo iba haciendo la idea y diseño de esta fábrica» y «tenía ya hecha la planta de los principales miembros del edificio»: una única estructura organizada en torno a doce patios, tal vez imitando la parrilla de hierro en la que san Lorenzo había sido martirizado. A pesar de las numerosas disputas entre el rey, sus arquitectos y los frailes de la nueva comunidad monástica, este diseño prevaleció, dotando de su forma característica a uno de los edificios más grandes de su época: un único cuadrilátero de 740 por 560 pies (207,20 m x 156,80 m), con un modesto aposento real cercano a la basílica, y rodeado por un complejo amurallado de jardines y campos con una extensión de cincuenta kilómetros cuadrados. Toledo comenzó a supervisar la preparación y nivelación del solar, y el 20 de agosto de 1563, día determinado como astrológicamente propicio, Felipe y su confesor presidían la colocación de la primera piedra de la basílica.

Según fray Antonio de Villacastín, el «obrero mayor» que supervisaba toda la construcción, «dende este día anduvo la obra con mucha furia por mandado del rey don Felipe». Pero la «furia» se disipó casi enseguida cuando Felipe insistió en dos importantes cambios: la adición de un colegio para la formación de sacerdotes y la duplicación del tamaño de la comunidad monástica, que pasaría de cincuenta a cien monjes.

Esto exigía añadir una planta entera al complejo. Para asegurarse de que «nuestro arquitecto» llevara a cabo este cambio (y muchos otros de índole menor), Felipe dio a Pedro de Hoyo, secretario de su Junta de Obras y Bosques, «las traças del monasterio, acabadas como vistes», así como instrucciones precisas: «Hazed que las saquen agora de la misma manera que están estas con sus escritas y sin mudar nada. Y que las saquen dobladas porque son menester tres de cada suelo: las unas para los frayles y las otras para Juan Bautista, y las otras para mý. Y hazed que las saquen en esta semana».[252]

Naturalmente, estos cambios, junto con la insistencia del rey en microgestionar todo lo que tuviera que ver con «su» convento, dieron lugar a demoras y excesos de coste. Para cuando Juan Bautista murió en 1567, el proyecto ya había absorbido casi un millón de ducados de la Hacienda de Castilla, pese a haberse construido todavía muy poco. Dos años más tarde, Felipe emitió una instrucción redactada en tono terminante por la que prohibía que los aparejadores cambiaran ninguna cosa de las trazas sin su consentimiento expreso («queremos que primero que se mude, se Nos consulte») e incluso les despojaba de autoridad para contratar la mano de obra: él mismo, a menudo a través de Herrera, negociaba los contratos directamente con los especialistas en los diversos tipos de construcción y luego ordenaba a los aparejadores que les proporcionaran una copia de la traza acordada, así como las especificaciones exactas. Este inusual sistema de construcción generó una cadena de montaje en la que los trabajadores seguían las mismas trazas para que Felipe pudiera controlar todos los aspectos del proceso de edificación, asegurando de este modo la uniformidad visual que constituye la característica más llamativa de San Lorenzo.[253]

Cuando en 1576 aconteció una «gran contradicción» entre el prior y los constructores, apoyados por los aparejadores,

Felipe realizó una visita especial «a verlo todo a vista de ojo, a cuya causa le fue necesario ir a las canteras donde se sacaban las dichas piedras para ver cargar y descargar las dichas piezas». Luego volvía a

> visitar la obra de la dicha iglesia viendo y considerando el asentar de las piedras labradas y por labrar, considerando el tiempo que se gastaba en lo uno y en lo otro, y halló ser mejor y más acertado el traer labradas las dichas piedras de la cantera porque se ahorraba tiempo y dinero como Su Majestad lo vio y experimentó.

Desde entonces, según Villacastín, «había 18 grúas y se trabajaba con todas, y se gastaban en solamente officiales y peones 10.000 ducados cada mes sin carretería ni otros materiales, solamente en la iglesia», hasta que en septiembre de 1584, a la vista de todos, el rey lloró mientras asistía a la consagración de la basílica [véase lámina 21].[254] Gracias a la intervención personal del rey, en palabras de Catherine Wilkinson Zerner, aunque «se emplearon muchas cuadrillas de obreros para construir el edificio, es imposible sin embargo distinguir ninguna diferencia en su colocación. La casi perfecta uniformidad de la ejecución técnica de El Escorial constituye un logro extraordinario».[255]

Entre tanto, la comunidad monástica fue cobrando vida. En 1571, los frailes jerónimos cantaron misa por primera vez en la nueva iglesia, mientras el rey observaba desde una ventana de su aposento que daba al altar. Al poco tiempo, una columna de novicios de Madrid y otra de monjes del convento jerónimo de Guadalupe llegaron «en muy lucida orden, dos guías a cauallo delante, ellos de dos en dos». El rey y sus cortesanos «salimos todos a las ventanas» y a continuación «díxose una misa cantada de spiritu santo; esta tarde vísperas solemníssimas de Don Laurentio; esta noche matines. A todo se halló Su Magestad». «Bien puede vuestra merced considerar», escribió un ministro del rey, «el contentamiento con que Su Magestad debe estar de verlo ya en este estado».[256]

Felipe también planificaba el traslado de los restos mortales de once de sus parientes desde sus lugares de descanso en toda España para su enterramiento en El Escorial, y pensó mucho en la erección de unas esculturas funerarias adecuadas para la nueva basílica. En 1572 aprobó un proyecto para dos grupos escultóricos de proporciones descomunales de la familia real, arrodilladas a ambos lados del altar mayor como si se hubieran unido a los monjes en una oración perpetua, y el trabajo comenzó en 1579 con un primer grupo de siete figuras para el cenotafio de Carlos, incluidos sus dos hijos muertos de niños. Felipe probablemente pretendía incluir en el suyo propio a sus hermanas Juana y María, pero, tal vez en aras de conseguir que el trabajo fuera concluido a tiempo, mandó reducir cada conjunto a cinco. Justo antes de morir, en 1598, pudo admirar las impresionantes estatuas de bronce, doradas y cuajadas de alhajas, de sus padres y tres de sus tías, hechas por Pompeo Leoni y su taller, y dio su conformidad a las estatuas de yeso para su propio conjunto (instaladas solemnemente en 1600). Como Rosemarie Mulcahy señaló, «podría decirse que son las esculturas funerarias de la realeza más impresionantes del arte europeo» [véase lámina 22] [257].

El esplendor faraónico de San Lorenzo impresionaba a todos. En 1593, a pesar de la guerra entre Inglaterra y España, el viajero inglés John Eliot elogió «el palacio más magnífico de todo Europa», añadiendo que era «el edificio más hermoso que he visto jamás en toda mi vida». Treinta años después, el viajero galés James Howell estuvo «en El Escorial para ver el monasterio de San Lorenzo, la octava maravilla del mundo» (una frase hiperbólica acuñada en 1579), donde admiró «el emplazamiento, la solemnidad de la obra y la simetría de la estructura». Tras considerar qué podría haber «movido al rey Felipe a malgastar tanto dinero», Howell insistía en que «hay un centenar de monjes, cada uno de ellos con su criado y su

mula, y multitud de oficiales; además hay tres bibliotecas, dotadas de un selecto surtido de libros de todas las disciplinas […]. En resumen, nada allí es vulgar. Si se quieren ver todas las estancias de la casa, es necesario recorrer diez millas [dieciocho kilómetros]». Era, concluía Howell, «un mundo de cosas maravillosas que me dejó completamente encantado. A partir de este impresionante monumento, puede inferirse que Felipe el Segundo, aunque era de baja estatura, debió de albergar en su interior pensamientos inmensos, gigantescos para que la posteridad, ante la vista de semejante mole, admirase su memoria».[258]

El coste de plasmar los «pensamientos inmensos» del rey en San Lorenzo también fue gigantesco. Villacastín estimó que, durante los más de treinta y cinco años de construcción, el rey había gastado seis millones y medio de ducados: una cifra superior al total de los ingresos de Castilla durante un año. El cronista y ayuda de cámara Jehan Lhermite, a quien Villacastín proporcionó esta estimación, señaló que «esta valoración, según la opinión del común, parece quedarse corta». El propio Lhermite pensaba que «todo ello sumado y considerado como conjunto, puede haber ascendido a unos nueve o diez millones en oro», y, acto seguido, añadía: «He oído decir que a Su Majestad misma no le habría gustado que se supiera a ciencia cierta su valor preciso y concreto».[259]

Sin embargo, cuando analizaban el «valor preciso y concreto» de construir el enorme edificio, tanto Howell como Villacastín y Lhermite olvidaban los costes de oportunidad que representan las horas que Felipe dedicó al proyecto. Consideremos la respuesta regia a una carta que le envió el prior de San Lorenzo en noviembre de 1571: tras exponer la necesidad de otro predicador y solicitar la decisión del monarca sobre un dilema arquitectónico relativo a la sacristía, el prior anunciaba que «este día se despidió un novicio de los que

vinieron de San Bartholomé porque…». La media línea de texto en la que se da la razón de la «despedida» ha sido cuidadosamente cortada con unas tijeras. Por si acaso el secretario encargado de responder al prior lo encontrara extraño, el rey escribió en el margen: «Está bien, Yo corté lo demás».[260] Cabe imaginar que el novicio —uno de aquellos cuya llegada tanto había conmovido al rey el día de San Lorenzo unos meses antes— había sido descubierto practicando la sodomía, y el rey había querido eliminar cualquier mención a ello para evitar la contaminación tanto del archivo como de la empresa [véase lámina 23].

El documento que el rey cortó (una decisión drástica y, aparentemente, única) era uno de los miles de papeles relacionados con el monasterio que llegaban a su mesa, y casi todos provocaban una decisión real. En contra de su habitual costumbre de tratar los negocios por escrito, el rey tomaba numerosas decisiones relativas a San Lorenzo solo después de realizar una visita personal y mantener una prolongada entrevista con los encargados de llevar a cabo sus órdenes. Así, en junio de 1575, uno de los monjes de San Lorenzo señaló que el rey había venido a «su casa» porque «le quedaban grandes negocios que despachar». ¿De qué tipo eran estos «grandes negocios»? Según el fraile, al rey le preocupaban «las costumbres que se habían de ordenar para este dicho monasterio». Hubo debates entre el rey, el prior, Villacastín y los principales frailes, «los cuales todos juntos hicieron lo que Dios Nuestro Señor les administró y en ninguna cosa se resolvieron sin que Su Magestad lo aprobase».[261] En lo que tocaba a San Lorenzo, el rey no desatendía nada. ¿Cómo debían ser las sillas del coro? Felipe pagó para que llevaran un «modelo de las sillas» hasta Badajoz, donde entonces residía, para poder examinar y aprobar personalmente el diseño (1580). ¿Dónde debían situarse las necesarias, es decir, los retretes? «No sé si de

estos agujeros saldría mal olor de las necesarias: para determinarlo mejor holgara de ver la planta del agua». Ni tampoco Felipe se ocupaba solo de los aposentos reales: «Hagan estas necesarias de manera que no den olor a la pieza de los mozos de la cocina».[262] Cabe preguntarse cuántos otros monarcas de la época encontraban tiempo para preocuparse de si el olor de los excrementos llegaría hasta la cocina.

Felipe el jardinero

El rey dedicaba casi tanto tiempo a la creación de sus jardines como a la construcción de sus palacios, y, de hecho, uno de los frailes jerónimos de El Escorial sospechaba que Felipe trataba de garantizar que, en San Lorenzo, los edificios y jardines progresaran al mismo ritmo. Un rescripto regio ológrafo para su secretario de la Junta de Obras y Bosques —uno de los cientos que han llegado hasta nuestros días— revela no solo un apasionado interés por las aves y los jardines, sino la misma curiosidad y entusiasmo por «qualquiera manera que sea en el campo» que había mostrado desde niño *(véase capítulo 1)*:

> Informaos cómo están los faisanes que tiene [la Casa de Campo] y si será menester algo para ellos, y si será mejor soltarlos todos o parte, o tenerlos allí, y avisadme dello. Y si ha apedreado algo en la huerta de las posturas y simientes, y cómo va esto. Y a Aranjuez escribid que avisen de lo mismo, y de las hayas, y si se oyen los francolines.[263]

También en este punto Felipe quiso imitar lo que había visto en sus viajes fuera de España. Enviaba jardineros y arquitectos al norte de Europa para que encontraran inspiración y, cuando su jardinero jefe murió, el rey se apresuró a «poner en cobro» las «traças y pinturas de la huerta y fuentes, y de otros jardines de Francia y Inglaterra y Flandes y otras partes y otras cosas que yo le mandé hazer».[264]

No todo venía del extranjero. En 1561, Felipe informó a Pedro de Hoyo de que «yo querría hazer venir de Valencia luego para plantar aquí ogaño algunas murtas y arrayanes y

también unos árboles que allí diz que ay muy lindos que llaman algarrobos». El secretario no solo debía gestionar su entrega, sino contratar también un jardinero experto para plantarlos, y «venid informado de adonde se podrían traer naranjos para el Prado». El rey compraba en grandes cantidades; así que, cuando murió en 1598, los jardines de Aranjuez contaban con casi 223.000 árboles, todos ellos plantados bajo la supervisión de Felipe. Según Catherine Wilkinson Zerner, «Aranjuez fue el más grande paisaje planificado antes de Versalles; y su diseño era único».[265]

Felipe era también un gran aficionado a la pesca, tanto en ríos como en estanques, y normalmente tomaba sus medidas para asegurarse una buena captura. Por un lado, eliminó toda competencia con una legislación draconiana: cualquiera que fuese descubierto pescando en los estanques reales recibiría cien azotes la primera vez, y, en una segunda, sería condenado a pena de galeras. Por otro, se «facilitaba» las capturas. Un día de 1566 dio orden de que «por si yo pudiese ir mañana al Pardo, […] que deshagüe el estanque pequeño desde esta noche, para que a la mañana esté ya baxo y le podamos pescar». Pocos años más tarde, adoptó la misma técnica en las cercanías de El Escorial: estaba con plan de «pescar el estanque grande de la Frexneda» y, con tal fin, uno de sus ingenieros «vació el dicho estanque, estando presente Su Magestad y los caballeros que suelen estar con Su Magestad, y se sacó cantidad de pescado».[266] Contra tan poco escrupuloso y determinado pescador, los peces del rey tenían pocas oportunidades.

En un plano más exótico, cabe señalar que Felipe mandó construir también dos parques zoológicos. Uno, en la Casa de Campo, albergaba elefantes, rinocerontes y leones, si bien la seguridad no demostró ser perfecta, ya que en 1563 una leona se escapó y casi mató a un cortesano, mientras la familia real observaba impotente la escena desde su carruaje. El otro, en

Aranjuez, más pequeño, se inauguró con cuatro camellos, traídos al real sitio desde África. (Cuando se comprobó la utilidad de estos animales en los trabajos de construcción como bestias de carga, se inició su cría, y para el fin del siglo había unos cuarenta de ellos.) En 1584 el rey añadió avestruces de África y, «por no herrar en la helezión de la traza para la casa de los abestruzes», ordenó dos «trazas» entre las que elegir: «la una en que no pueden caber más que abestruzes, que costará 500 ducados, y la otra en que podrá haver otros géneros de aves, 3.000 ducados». Felipe determinó que «la de los avestruzes que costará 500 ducados se haga», pero la economía de la decisión resultó fallida, porque un día un «abestruz bravo» escapó de su «casa» y atacó a un jardinero, causándole heridas tan graves que este tuvo que permanecer varias semanas sin trabajar.[267]

Mecenas de las ciencias y las artes

Felipe era también un ávido coleccionista de tesoros artísticos. Llegado el momento de su muerte, poseía más de 5.000 monedas y medallas; 137 astrolabios y relojes; 113 estatuas de personas famosas esculpidas en bronce y mármol; así como incontables joyas, piedras preciosas y adornos de plata y oro; todo ello sugiere, al igual que su colección de 7.422 reliquias *(véase capítulo 5)*, una cierta obsesión. Pero Felipe también hacía gala de una genuina y casi inagotable curiosidad. Así, en 1583 realizó una visita especial a Segovia «por ver aquel excelente ingenio de hacer moneda, invención del archiduque de Austria». Cuatro años después, cuando Jehan Lhermite llegó desde Flandes a la corte con un par de patines, el rey pidió que hiciera una exhibición en el estanque helado de la Casa de Campo, mientras observaba con sus hijos desde su carruaje. Luego, hizo que el recién llegado se acercase «a su coche de caballos, pues quería ver de cerca uno de mis patines, que yo le enseñé». Como las heladas continuaron durante tres semanas

más, el rey acudió varias veces a ver a Lhermite ejecutar «en plena carrera tres o cuatro audaces piruetas».[268]

El rey contrató a otro flamenco, Francisco Holbeek, «que tiene encargo de la destilación de aguas de flores» en el real sitio de Aranjuez, para que creara un jardín botánico (o «jardín de simples», por usar el término de la época) en el cual producir «quintaesencias» capaces de curar dolencias humanas, según las enseñanzas atribuidas al filósofo mallorquín Raimundo Lulio (Felipe coleccionaba sistemáticamente las obras de Lulio para la biblioteca de El Escorial). El proyecto alcanzó pleno desarrollo en 1569, cuando un catedrático de medicina en Sevilla alabó la diligencia del rey al enviar «un herbolario diligentísimo, que anda por esta Andalucía con un catálogo de yerbas, buscando los puestos de ella para llevarles a Aranjuez, en donde Su Majestad […] hace grandes jardines para todo género de plantas […] útiles para el uso medicinal».[269] El año siguiente, Felipe amplió su investigación al ordenar a Francisco Hernández, su protomédico general de las Indias, que viajase a América para recolectar plantas con usos medicinales. Durante los siete años siguientes, Hernández registró unas tres mil especies vegetales, de las cuales más de ochocientas fueron cuidadosamente prensadas y devueltas al rey para que se encuadernaran, acompañadas de sus correspondientes dibujos y comentarios.

Felipe tenía otro motivo para crear estos jardines de simples y reunir flora americana. En 1585 se inició la construcción de un complejo de «siete u ocho piezas» con chimeneas y hornos especiales para servir de laboratorio en El Escorial, «donde se ven extrañas maneras de destilatorios, nuevos modos de alambiques, unos de metal, otros de vidrio, con que se hacen mil pruebas de la naturaleza y que con la fuerza del arte del fuego y otros medios e instrumentos descubren sus entrañas y secretos». En 1588, se recibieron cuatrocientos alambiques de

vidrio (junto con otros cien para sustituir los que se rompieran), muchos de ellos adaptados a una «torre filosofal» de bronce, de casi siete metros de altura, capaz de producir hasta noventa kilogramos de «quintaesencias» al día [véase lámina 24] .[270]

Felipe sentía curiosidad por muchos otros aspectos del mundo natural. Cuando en 1562 la construcción del palacio de El Pardo se vio retrasada por la falta de agua, aceptó los servicios de un zahorí: un morisco, «niño de hasta ocho años», que afirmaba «que no vee cosa debaxo de tierra sino agua, ora esté hondo o somero, pero que no la vee sino en día de sol claro». Felipe ordenó al muchacho que se pusiera manos a la obra «el primer día que hiziere sol claro», y por supuesto decidió observarle mientras trabajaba: «Será bueno que hiziésedes que llevasen allá al mochacho zaorí, que parece que hará buen día». Cuando la «prueva del agua del mochacho» dio con el agua a unos siete metros bajo la superficie, Felipe envió al zahorí a trabajar a El Escorial.[271]

El rey promovió también otras formas de difusión científica que, aún hoy, gozan de una enorme reputación. Las imprentas de diferentes ciudades españolas publicaron setenta y cuatro ediciones y cincuenta y siete reediciones de obras de ciencia entre 1561 y 1610. Algunas de ellas, como la *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* de José de Acosta, publicada por primera vez en latín en Salamanca en 1589, alcanzaron gran éxito comercial tanto en España como en el extranjero, pero la mayoría de esas publicaciones dependieron del patrocinio directo de Felipe. Resulta difícil imaginar cómo un impresor hubiera podido costear la publicación de la bellamente ilustrada traducción —a cargo de Pedro Ambrosio Ondériz— de los libros XI y XII de los *Elementos* de Euclides en 1585 sin una subvención real de setecientos ducados. Igualmente, el donativo real de trescientos ducados resultó determinante para permitir a don Diego de

Zúñiga publicar en 1584 sus *Comentarios al libro de Job* en latín, el único refrendo explícito de la teoría heliocéntrica de Copérnico que se produjo en la España moderna.[272]

Felipe también patrocinó a muchos escritores no científicos, especialmente a aquellos que ensalzaban a la familia real —Juan Rufo recibió una subvención de quinientos ducados para costear la publicación de su poema épico *Austriada*, una alabanza de don Juan— o le dedicaban sus obras. Pero los pagos más grandes se reservaron para dos encargos religiosos. En primer lugar, Felipe proporcionó más de 10.000 ducados a la imprenta de Cristóbal Plantino, en Amberes, como subvención a la impresión de la *Biblia Regia* de ocho volúmenes [véase lámina 15] y [véase lámina 16]. Más tarde, intervino en la preparación de *In Ezechielem explanationes et apparatus urbis ac Templi Hierosolymitani*, una obra de tres grandes volúmenes en folio compuesta por dos jesuitas, Juan Bautista Villalpando y Jerónimo Prado, repleta de lujosos grabados en los que se muestra el aspecto que debió de tener el Templo de Jerusalén. En 1590 tuvieron una audiencia con el rey, quien, después de insistir en unos cambios de diseño, les proporcionó más de ocho mil ducados para los grabados y la impresión de dos mil ejemplares (aunque solamente como un anticipo sobre las futuras ventas: el rey ordenó que «se buelva a mi patrimonio lo que se hubiere supplido dél para este effecto»).[273]

Felipe concibió algunos proyectos para conocer en profundidad los territorios sobre los que gobernaba. Primero, poco antes de regresar a España en 1559, el rey encargó al cartógrafo flamenco Jacob van Deventer «visitar, medir y dibujar todas las ciudades de estas provincias, con sus ríos y aldeas colindantes, así como sus cruces y pasos fronterizos. Todo este trabajo debe plasmarse en un libro en el que figure una vista de cada provincia, seguido de una representación de cada ciudad».[274] Cuando Van Deventer murió en 1575, había

completado más de 250 planos a vista de pájaro. Su trabajo constituye un logro cartográfico único: ninguna otra región en el siglo XVI puede presumir de una colección de planos de ciudades con una exactitud, uniformidad y precisión semejantes. Mientras Van Deventer trabajaba en su encargo, Felipe II pidió a Anton van den Wyngaerde (Antonio de las Viñas), otro cartógrafo flamenco, que viniera a España para llevar a cabo un trabajo similar. Aunque la técnica de Wyngaerde era algo diferente, ya que este trabajaba desde una ligera elevación y en formato panorámico en lugar de hacerlo desde la perspectiva de vista de pájaro, su resultado fue igual de impresionante. Existen cincuenta y seis vistas de ciudades españolas acabadas por Wyngaerde, así como bocetos preparatorios de varias más.

En 1566, Felipe encargó a Pedro de Esquivel, catedrático de matemáticas en Alcalá de Henares y capellán real, que llevara a cabo las investigaciones necesarias para otro proyecto: un mapa de la península ibérica de una escala sin precedentes hasta entonces. Después de la muerte de Esquivel, un equipo de expertos liderado por Juan López de Velasco, el cosmógrafo real, continuó el proyecto y, aunque nunca se terminó ni se publicó, en la biblioteca de San Lorenzo de El Escorial se depositó un atlas que contenía el mapa general de la península junto con veinte detallados mapas regionales a una escala de 1:430.000 (casi la misma que la de los mapas aeronáuticos de hoy en día). Constituyen un logro único: el *Atlas de El Escorial* contiene los mapas más grandes de Europa de su época, basados en un detallado estudio de campo.

Felipe también patrocinó una serie de cuestionarios, más tarde conocidos como las *Relaciones topográficas*, que se enviaron en la década de 1570 a todas las poblaciones de la Corona de Castilla requiriendo información sobre su geografía, historia, economía, población y «antigüedades», como prólogo

a la redacción de una «descripción y historia de los pueblos de España, que manda se haga para honra y ennoblecimiento destos reynos». En una carta adjunta, el rey explicaba la necesidad de que cada comunidad rellenara el cuestionario porque, sin esa información, «si se huuiesen de embiar perssona a traer las rrelaciones que para ello son menester, no podría hauer la breuedad con que holgaríamos que esto se hiziese».[275] Felipe organizó una doble operación del mismo tipo para Nueva España y Perú en la misma década. López de Velasco envió varios cuestionarios con toda clase de preguntas: quién había descubierto y colonizado cada lugar, cómo era su clima, paisaje y población (y cómo había cambiado con el tiempo y por qué), qué poblaciones nativas vivían allí, cómo vivían y qué comían, qué edificios, civiles y eclesiásticos, existían. Velasco también pedía mapas, aunque en este aspecto calculó mal, ya que muchas comunidades coloniales carecían de un cartógrafo español y, por tanto, enviaron un mapa realizado por un artista indígena que usaba las convenciones tradicionales en aquel lugar, desconocidas en España.

Felipe reunió todos los mapas y vistas de sus amplios dominios en El Escorial con el propósito de que, aparte de todas sus demás funciones, el complejo se convirtiera en un centro de investigación. La carta fundacional de 1567 preveía un colegio para veinticuatro alumnos de teología y humanidades, y un seminario para treinta ordenandos. «En lo de los libros, yo tengo ya mandado juntar aquí alguna buena cantidad dellos» en una nueva biblioteca, explicaba, porque «es una de las principales memorias que aquí se pueden dexar, assí para el provechamiento particular de los religiosos que en esta casa huvieren de morar, como para el beneficio público de todos los hombres de letras que quisieren venir a leer en ellos».[276] En el momento de su muerte, la biblioteca del monasterio estaba formada por catorce mil volúmenes.

Felipe también creó un centro del saber en la capital de su monarquía. El día de Navidad de 1582, «deseando el aprovechamiento de nuestros vasallos y que en nuestros reynos aya ombres expertos y que entiendan bien las Mathemáticas y el arte de Architectura y las otras çiencias y facultades a ellas annexas», Felipe firmó varias cédulas para crear una Academia de Matemáticas en Madrid y nombrar a tres catedráticos. Uno de ellos, João Bautista Lavanha, un cartógrafo y académico portugués, recibiría cuatrocientos ducados al año «para que se ocupe y entienda en nuestra corte y donde se le ordenare en cosas de cosmografía, geografía y topografía y en leer matemáticas». Los tres expertos adquirieron el estatus de «nuestro criado», lo que significaba que se convertían en miembros de la Casa Real, bajo el mando directo de Juan de Herrera, quien firmaba un certificado cada cuatro meses confirmando que habían realizado su trabajo satisfactoriamente, para que pudieran así cobrar su generoso sueldo, considerablemente más alto que el de cualquier profesor de universidad en la época.[277] El rey tenía una meta deliberada. En 1584, Herrera publicó su *Institución* para la nueva Academia de Matemáticas, en la que enfatizaba dos puntos: su selecta clientela y su filosofía elitista. Cada mañana, los profesores daban conferencias públicas en castellano en el patio del Alcázar, principalmente

> para que los hijos de los nobles, que en la corte y palacio de Su Magestad se crían y se instruyen en el lenguaje y trato cortesano, tengan, entretanto que salgan a la guerra y cargos de gobierno, ocupación loable y virtuosa en que gastar el tiempo honradamente, sin que por falta de conversación larga y de gusto, ayan de dar en entretenimientos derramados y otras faltas que siguen a la moçedad desocupada.

En resumen, el objetivo de la academia era formar nuevos funcionarios al servicio del rey.[278]

Un día cualquiera

La infinidad de intereses de Felipe, junto con su asombrosa

dedicación tanto al trabajo como a la oración, llevaría a cualquier lector a preguntarse cómo se las arreglaba el rey para hacer tantas cosas. Como cualquier otro ser humano, Felipe solamente podía contar con veinticuatro horas cada día y siete días cada semana, y, dondequiera que residiese (ya fuera en Madrid, en Lisboa o en una de sus casas de campo), sus días seguían en gran medida la misma rutina. Normalmente, dormía a solas y se levantaba alrededor de las ocho de la mañana, y no antes: «Haréis que hasta las ocho no ay golpes ni ruydo grande», le comunicaba un día a sus ministros. Una vez sus barberos le habían afeitado y sus gentilhombres de cámara, aseado y vestido, empezaba sus labores diarias firmando las cédulas que sus secretarios habían preparado el día antes, como recordó en cierta ocasión: «Estoy firmando agora lo que ha venido porque esto es siempre lo primero». El número de firmas requerido resultaba ingente: un día de 1576, Felipe explicó a un secretario que «hoy no os he podido llamar por echar de mý papeles, que lo menos ha sido firmar casi 400 firmas».[279] Luego, el rey acudía a «oír misa, comenzando a negociar con Dios». Según fray Pablo de Mendoza, en su análisis del horario típico del rey, «en esto se puede gastar hora y media».[280] A continuación, Felipe concedía audiencias (cuando se encontraba en Madrid) o bien firmaba más cartas y cédulas hasta las once de la mañana, hora en que tomaba la primera de sus dos comidas diarias, generalmente solo. Después se echaba una siesta mientras sus ministros trabajaban, y las tareas principales de gobierno comenzaban a continuación, cuando sus ayudas de cámara llevaban hasta su mesa las consultas de sus consejos, así como los memoriales y cartas dirigidas «al rey en su mano», para que Felipe pudiera leer y escribir sus decretos, cortos o largos. Sabemos que el rey era diestro porque cada vez que «la gota» (artritis) afectaba a su mano o muñeca derecha no podía ni firmar ni escribir nada.

También sabemos que sus «ruines ojos» a veces le estorbaban, especialmente por la luz de las velas. Se quejaba de ello con frecuencia: «Es ya tan tarde y yo tengo los ojos ya a esta hora que no veo con ellos»; «no tengo tiempo ni aun ojos, que me van faltando mucho a las noches»; o estaba escribiendo «con los ojos medio cerrados».[281]

Alrededor de 1580, el uso de la estampilla soslayó el problema de su muñeca, y su visión recibió una ayuda inesperada de Inglaterra, que se ufanaba de su próspera industria de fabricación de lentes. El secretario Gabriel de Zayas suplicó a un comerciante español que vivía en Londres que le enviara unos «antojos» porque, «aunque yo (a Dios gracias) no los he menester, querría cumplir con el duque de Alva y otros amigos que tienen neçessidad dellos». Al poco tiempo, el propio Felipe empezó a usar lentes para trabajar, aunque se negaba a hacerlo en público. «No me sirve tanto la vista como solía para leer en el carro», confesó en 1586, pero «sacar allí antojos es mucha desvergüença».[282]

La adquisición de mejores relojes constituyó otra importante ayuda a su eficacia. Lhermite escribió una descripción detallada de los dos relojes de que «se servía Su Majestad habitualmente en su cámara». Uno de ellos venía equipado con un repique de campanillas, y ambos tenían unas lámparas de aceite que les permitían servir «como luminarias de noche en lugar de las velas», de modo que «Su Magestad no se servía de otra luz que la que daban estas lámparas cuando le necesitaba leer sus papeles». En opinión de Lhermite (quien al ser ayuda de cámara de Felipe hablaba con conocimiento de causa), los relojes «en la cámara del rey presentaban una apariencia muy curiosa y señorial»:

> Puedo decir que no hubo otro mueble ni objeto que apreciara más el rey ni de los que gustara más y sacara más provecho que de estas dos máquinas, y de día y de noche los ponía delante de sus ojos. Y podemos decir para resumir que

gobernaban totalmente a este buen monarca, pues regulaban y escandían su vida, dividiéndola en minutos que, contados y ordenados, medían sus acciones y ocupaciones diarias, lo que causaba no poca admiración a todos nosotros [véase lámina 25] [283]

Si hacía buen tiempo, el rey se liberaba en algunas ocasiones de la tiranía de los relojes, aunque rara vez de la de sus papeles. «Hasta agora no he podido desembolverme destos diablos de papeles, y aún me quedan algunos para la noche y aun llebo otros para leer en el campo adonde daremos una buelta agora», le decía a su secretario un día de la primavera de 1577.[284] Pero a veces escapaba de ellos completamente. En los primeros años de su reinado, en los Países Bajos, cazaba aves en el parque de Bruselas («ha venido un sofí a los picaços del parque, que es la calderuela de noche, y ante noche matamos XIIII») y otros animales en el palacio de Binche («que es buena tierra para ello y también para el provecho que vos sabéys que me hace a la salud el ejercicio y el campo»).[285] Después de su regreso a España, Felipe siguió participando en torneos y justas durante un tiempo, y aun a los cincuenta años de edad, todavía se entregaba a ejercicios más vigorosos, como viajar y cazar a caballo. Sus ministros de vez en cuando expresaban cierta envidia por las ausencias de su amo. Por ejemplo, en 1576, en el Bosque de Segovia, Mateo Vázquez le envió un implícito reproche en su billete sobre los asuntos que habían surgido «después que Vuestra Magestad salió a la pesca»; pero Felipe persistía en respirar el aire fresco. Poco después, anunció a Vázquez que «por tener concertado con la reyna de ir fuera, no os llamo».[286]

El rey disfrutaba también asistiendo a espectáculos, especialmente con su familia. En 1584, con motivo del Corpus Christi, en El Escorial «se representó una comedia, en el paño del claustro segundo, de la conversión de santa Pelagia. Estuvo Su Magestad y el príncipe y las infantas y caballeros; que duró

tres horas». Una década después, en Madrid y justo antes de Cuaresma, presenciaron cómo dos acróbatas italianos bailaban y actuaban al ritmo de la música sobre un cable, tendido frente al Alcázar, «haciendo reir al publico». El rey también disfrutaba en los espectáculos taurinos, como cuando asistió a las corridas que durante cinco días se celebraron en Lisboa para festejar el fracaso de un ataque francés a las Azores y describió los mejores lances en una carta a sus hijas.[287] En 1586, se dispuso para asistir a un auto de fe en Toledo, explicándole a su secretario que «es cosa de ver, para los que no lo han visto»; aunque finalmente no pudo acudir en esa ocasión, cinco años más tarde se sintió feliz de visitar la ciudad y llevar a sus hijos a presenciar el espectáculo. Su única queja fue, tal y como escribió a su hija Catalina, que era algo que «vos no habéis visto».[288]

En la intimidad, la principal fuente de distracción de Felipe desde que era muchacho fueron, al parecer, los bobos, los bufones y los enanos. Aparte de Perejón *(véase capítulo 1)*, la más conocida era Magdalena Ruiz, que entró al servicio real en 1568 y murió en El Escorial en 1605. Magdalena tenía ataques epilépticos, se emborrachaba y se atiborraba de comida (especialmente de fresas) hasta que se ponía enferma. Cada vez que aparecía en público, la gente coreaba: «Dala la cuerda», con la intención de provocarla o asustarla. Felipe la llevó con él a Portugal en 1580, desde donde llenaba las cartas que escribía a sus hijas con anécdotas, relatándoles sus ocurrencias y defectos. Magdalena «estuvo muy enojada conmigo porque le reñí algunas cosas que había hecho en Belem», les contaba en 1581; y, pocos meses más tarde, «Magdalena está enojada conmigo después que os escribió», porque no la apoyó en una discusión que esta tuvo con otro cortesano: «Se ha ido muy enojada conmigo, diciendo que se quiere ir y que le ha de matar, mas creo que mañana se le habrá ya olvidado». En otra carta, Felipe informaba a sus hijas de que Magdalena «está muy malparada y

flaca y vieja y sorda y medio caduca y creo que todo es del beber». Pero si el rey era a veces descortés con Magdalena, esta no se quedaba atrás: después de realizar un viaje desde El Escorial a La Fresneda en 1584, Felipe informaba de que «fui a caballo y volví en carro, y no ando a caballo "por quererme tornar niño", como dice Magdalena».[289] La frecuencia con la que Magdalena aparece en las cartas del rey sugiere que la veía todos los días.

Una vez sentado de nuevo a su mesa, Felipe habitualmente trabajaba hasta las nueve de la noche, cuando cenaba (siempre a solas), aunque solía dar un pequeño paseo antes. Un día en 1578, explicaba (por escrito, naturalmente) a Vázquez como «buen descuydo he hecho oy» porque sus ayudas habían traído dos pliegos y «púselos donde estaban otros papeles sobre un escritorio para verlos después; y como cargaron las audiencias, y los demás que os di oy, y otros muchos que havía firmado antes, holvidóseme dellos… hasta que agora, que son ya las IX». Pero luego el rey tuvo un golpe de suerte: «[Habiendo] pedido la cena, paseándome un poco antes, y pasando cerca del escritorio, los acerté a ver y los he leýdo». Cuando estaba metido en asuntos urgentes, el rey podía retrasar su cena. «Son las diez y no he cenado ni alçado la caveça en todo el día», escribió a Vázquez una noche de 1588 mientras trabajaba afanosamente en el negocio de la Gran Armada, «como veréis en el tamaño del pliego que lleva la cubierta para Çayas. Y assí me volveréis» todas las otras consultas pendientes «mañana», porque «agora no ay ojos ni cabeça».[290]

La cena, cuando llegaba, era abundante, aunque monótona. Todas las noches, como para la comida, Felipe podía elegir entre pollo frito o asado, perdiz, paloma, una porción de carne de caza, una tajada de venado y un buen pedazo de carne de ternera. Había sopas y pan blanco en cada comida, fruta a la hora del almuerzo y ensaladas por la tarde; pero, según los

libros de contabilidad de su casa, el rey rara vez comía verduras o fruta. Hasta 1585, comió pescado todos los viernes, pero, aquel año, obtuvo el permiso expreso del papa para comer carne aun ese día y durante la Cuaresma: «No querer probar a mudarnos el régimen», informó a Gregorio XIII, y a partir de entonces solo abandonaba la carne el Viernes Santo.[291]

Después de la cena, el rey continuaba trabajando en sus papeles hasta las once, pero rara vez hasta más tarde. Un día de 1572, en El Escorial, Antonio Gracián recibió una carta enviada desde Madrid «y con gran presteza se me ordenaba le diese a Su Majestad antes de acostarse; enviele luego a palacio que eran ya cerca de las once y ya Su Majestad era acostado y no se le pudo dar». En 1586 Felipe amonestó al incansable Vázquez por enviarle documentos a la hora de irse a la cama: «Estávame yo acostando anoche quando vino esto, y ya sabéis que después de cenar no quieren los físicos que [yo] vea papel ninguno». Cuando repasaba mentalmente lo que había hecho en un día cualquiera, tenía la impresión de no haberse dedicado a otra cosa que al papeleo. Una noche, en El Escorial, se quejó a sus hijas (en Madrid) de que «todo ha sido leer y escribir con ser día de correo y otras muchas cosas que he tenido hoy que hacer, pero todo de esto; y así escribo esta a más de las diez y harto cansado y no habiendo hecho colación».[292]

Solo la combinación de todas estas virtudes —sus extenuantes y continuas jornadas de trabajo, su inteligencia y sistema de información, su régimen de ejercicio y su templanza — puede explicar cómo Felipe pudo tomar tantas decisiones sobre tantos asuntos distintos durante los cincuenta y cinco años en que gobernó. Pero esta proeza disfrazaba un grave defecto: a pesar de su ejemplar ética del trabajo, Felipe mostraba a veces una sorprendente indisciplina. Parece que no podía resistir la tentación de escribir comentarios en todos los papeles relacionados con San Lorenzo de El Escorial y con su

patronato eclesiástico, mientras que muchos documentos sobre temas de seguridad nacional le esperaban, precisamente como don Diego de Córdoba, don Juan de Silva y otros se quejaban *(véase capítulo 4)*.

El rey no ignoraba este problema. En marzo de 1566, con la guerra en el Mediterráneo, una rebelión recién evitada en México y una crisis en los Países Bajos, Pedro de Hoyo se disculpó por importunar a su señor con «menudencias» sobre Obras y Bosques: «Como veo a Vuestra Majestad con tantas ocupaciones, a veces temo de darle pesadumbre con cosas que no tienen mucho peligro en dilatar». El rey respondió: «Corto las ocupaciones: no faltan estos días, *pero algunas veçes viene a descansar el hombre dellas con esotras cosas*».[293] ¡Todos los que han ejercido el poder ejecutivo comprenderán esta afirmación! En tiempos de crisis, la resolución de algunos problemas menores puede proporcionar una satisfacción a corto plazo —o, como Felipe decía, «viene a descansar el hombre»— para, recuperadas la confianza y la serenidad, poder enfrentarse de nuevo a los problemas más importantes. Pero Córdoba, Silva y otros no se quejaban de que Felipe no se ocupara de «cosas que no tienen mucho peligro en dilatar» solo «algunas veçes», sino que lo hacían constantemente, sugiriendo que su «descanso» había llegado a ser evasión.

¿Sexo en palacio?

Algunas personas han sugerido que el «descanso» del rey incluía también relaciones sexuales ilícitas. En su biografía de 1997, *Felipe de España*, Henry Kamen afirmó que la inclinación de Felipe «por las mujeres era evidente (solo fue escrupulosamente fiel a una de sus esposas, Ana)», y afirmaba que, «después de su boda inglesa, cuando Felipe salió hacia los Países Bajos en 1555, tuvo aventuras al menos con dos damas»; y «a pesar de su matrimonio» con Isabel de Valois, «Felipe continuó dirigiendo

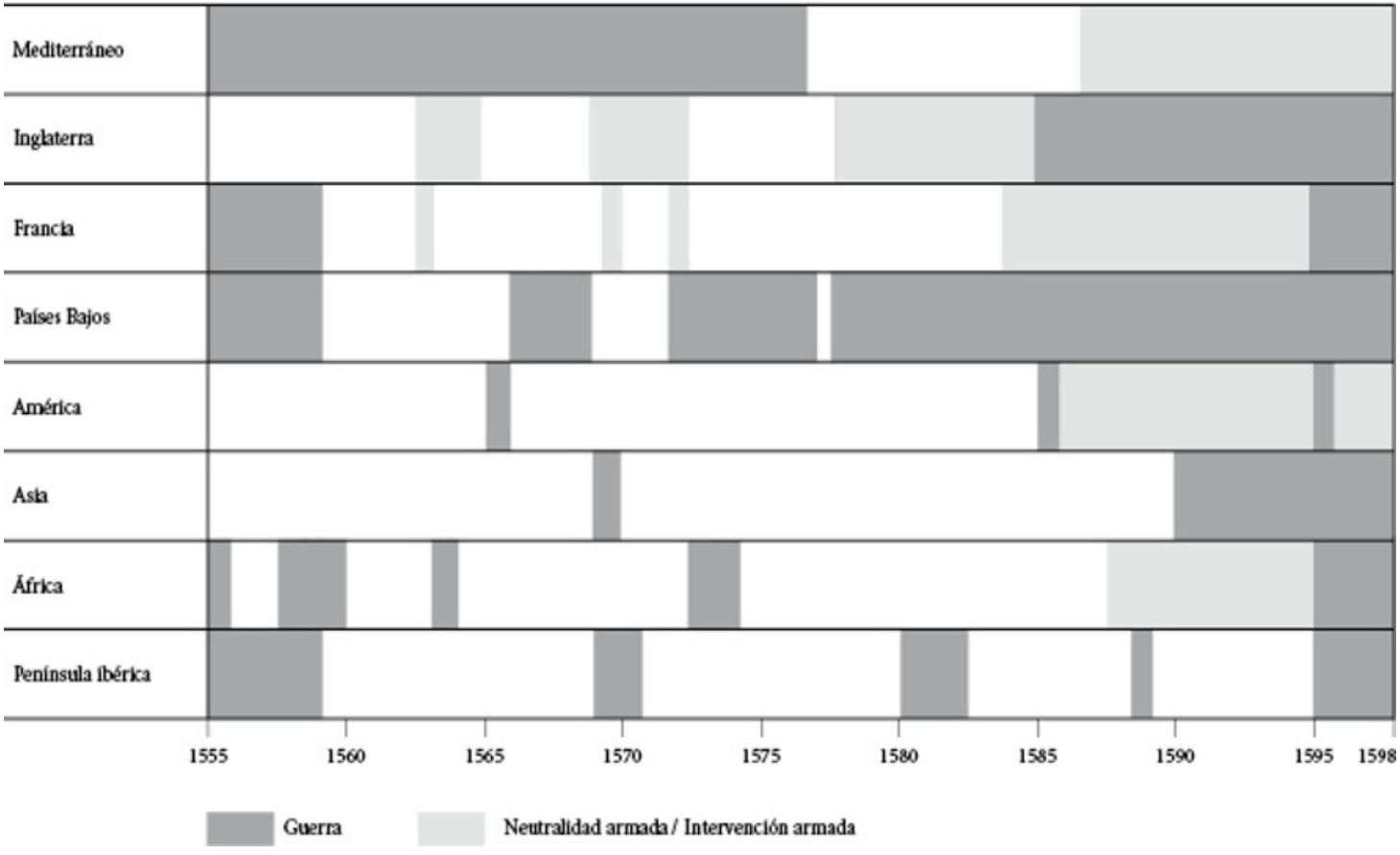
sus energías sexuales a otros objetivos». «Es posible que haya tenido otras amantes», añadió Kamen misteriosamente, «pero no está documentado».[294] Según parece, solo tenemos la «confesión» de una mujer que experimentó el interés sexual de Felipe. Según el confesor de doña Magdalena Dacre, una dama de la reina María Tudor en 1554 o 1555, «cuando vivía en la Corte como doncella, el rey Felipe, con quien la reina María se casó, abrió una ventana donde por casualidad ella se lavaba la cara y, de manera gustosa, introducía su brazo». Su confesor (y biógrafo) continuó: «Aunque otras quizás hubieran tomado esto como gran honor», doña Magdalena se ultrajó y, «considerando su propia pureza de mayor importancia que la Magestad del rey, tomó un bastón y golpeó fuertemente el brazo del rey». Solo una razón podría explicar por qué un monarca casado abría una ventana para «manosear» a una de las damas de su esposa mientras ella se bañaba.[295]

El resto de pruebas sobre la promiscuidad de Felipe proviene de terceros, y concernía únicamente a dos damas. En un caso, el de Isabel Osorio *(véase capítulo 1)*, parece plausible; en otro, el de doña Eufrasia de Guzmán, no. Es cierto que, en su *Relación del Estado de España* al Senado veneciano en 1565, el embajador Giovanni Soranzo pretendía que Felipe había sido padre de un niño, el príncipe de Asculi, con doña Eufrasia de Guzmán (al igual que doña Isabel Osorio, dama de Juana de Austria). Sin embargo, Soranzo fue, aparentemente, el único embajador que lo mencionó, y solo lo hizo después de regresar de Venecia, no en los despachos que escribió mientras se hallaba en España. Un comentario de Ruy Gómez, cuyo cargo de sumiller de corps le obligaba a dormir en la cámara del rey, proporciona la pista definitiva. En octubre de 1564, este facilitó al embajador francés «algunos detalles de las anteriores relaciones amorosas del rey, que en ese momento habían cesado y estaban fuera del palacio». Al informar de esta indiscreción al

rey Carlos IX, el embajador no hizo mención a doña Eufrasia ni a nadie más. Dado que la reina era hermana de Carlos, no hay duda de que si aquel hubiese sugerido cualquier información relacionada con un adulterio, la habría mencionado, y, con mayor razón, si el rey hubiera engendrado un hijo ilegítimo.[296]

Fuera como fuese, las especulaciones continuaron. En 1578, el embajador don Juan de Zúñiga advertía a su amo de «una opinión que anduvo los otros días muy extendida por Roma: que Vuestra Magestad tenía un hijo bastardo y que difería la provisión de las encomiendas [de las órdenes militares] con fin de unir algunas de ellas y hacer una muy grande que darle», para lo cual el papa debía dar su consentimiento. No obstante, proseguía Zúñiga, «si le hay, será bien sacar con tiempo dispensación, para todas las cosas que Vuestra Magestad quisiere que pueda tener, aunque no sea legítimo». Lo que hace esta carta tan extraordinaria es que Zúñiga, compañero de Felipe desde «los años de la juventud» (como escribió en la misma carta), aparentemente no mostró sorpresa ninguna de que «Vuestra Magestad tuviera tal hijo».[297] Unos años después, también en Roma, un cardenal preguntó a su agente en Madrid si Felipe tenía una hija natural. Tras una cuidadosa investigación, el agente contestó: «Hasta ahora no he oído ni una sola palabra sobre una hija natural de Su Majestad»; y añadió: «Sí he escuchado que un par de príncipes afirman ser hijos suyos», aunque no lo creía «porque Su Majestad no ha dado ninguna señal de reconocerlos como tales».[298] De todos modos, algunos continuaron creyendo lo peor. Cuando William Cecil, barón Burghley y principal consejero de Isabel (y anteriormente ministro de Felipe y María), leyó la *Relación de la Felicíssima Armada*, en la que se enumeraba la gente particular reunida en Lisboa en mayo de 1588, al encontrarse con el nombre del «príncipe de Asculi» anotó: «El bastardo del rey de España». Asimismo, diez años

después, un manuscrito inglés redactado por el privado de Isabel, el conde de Essex, y titulado *Anatomie of Spayne* [*Anatomía de España*] dedicaba una página al «incestuoso adulterio» de Felipe con doña Eufrasia de Guzmán.[299] ¿Por qué hombres de Estado por otra parte sensatos como Guillermo de Orange y el barón Burghley estaban interesados en inventarle una vida sexual adúltera a Felipe II? La respuesta está en la agresiva política exterior del rey en el norte de Europa, que incitaba a sus enemigos a usar todas sus armas para contraatacarles.


Mediterráneo
Inglaterra
Francia
Países Bajos
América
Asia
África
Península ibérica
1555
1560
1565
1570
1575
1580
1585
1590
1595
1598
Guerra
Neutralidad armada / Intervención armada

Las guerras de Felipe II. La monarquía de Felipe II disfrutó de la paz solo seis meses: entre febrero y septiembre de 1577, cuando cesaron las hostilidades tanto en los Países Bajos como en el Mediterráneo. Después, aunque el rey no volvió a guerrear contra los turcos, resurgieron los conflictos en los Países Bajos (que duraron hasta 1609) y comenzaron las hostilidades con Inglaterra (que se sucedieron entre 1585 y 1603). Tras el asesinato de Enrique III en 1589, Felipe se involucró cada vez más en las guerras de religión francesas hasta la Paz de Vervins en 1598. En el extranjero, las expediciones portuguesas en África y el sur de Asia dieron lugar a diversos conflictos: primero, contra sus enemigos locales y, más tarde, contra los holandeses, que después de 1594 comenzaron a enviar flotas armadas al océano Índico.

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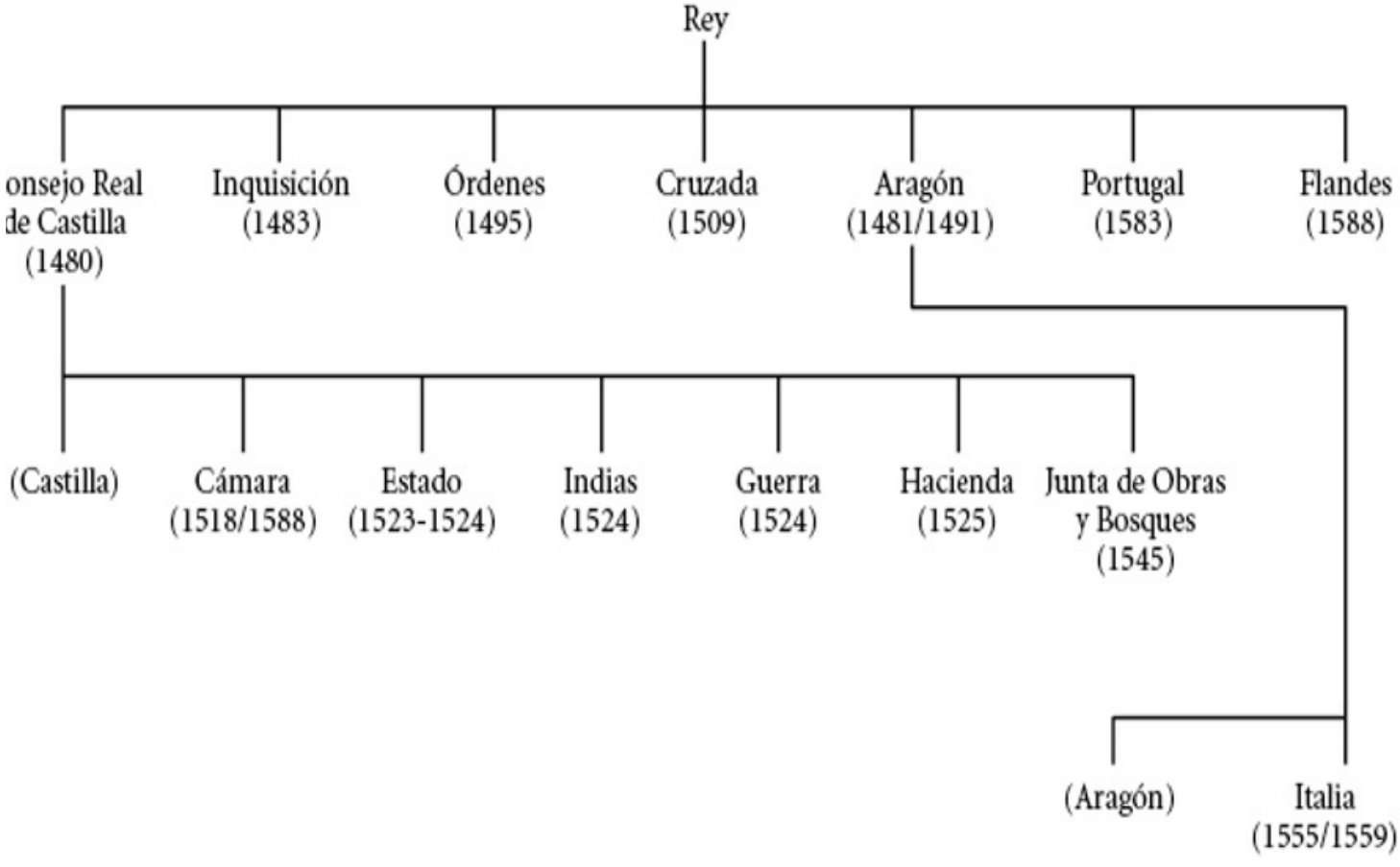
Rey
onsejo Real de Castilla (1480)
Inquisición (1483)
Órdenes (1495)
Cruzada (1509)
Aragón (1481/1491)
Portugal (1583)
Flandes (1588)
(Castilla)
Cámara (1518/1588)
Estado (1523-1524)
Indias (1524)
Guerra (1524)
Hacienda (1525)
Junta de Obras y Bosques (1545)
(Aragón)
Italia (1555/1559)

Los consejos de Felipe II. A la muerte del rey en 1598, catorce consejos centrales o juntas permanentes (equivalentes a los actuales ministerios o departamentos gubernamentales) asesoraban a Felipe. Once de ellos los había heredado, de modo que él únicamente creó tres: el Consejo de Italia, en la década de 1550, y los de Portugal y Flandes, en la de 1580. (La repetición del nombre del consejo entre paréntesis indica que siguió activo aunque el rey traspasó algunas de sus funciones a un nuevo organismo. Las dos fechas de creación separadas por una barra inclinada indican que el rey modificó profundamente las responsabilidades de este organismo en el último año, por lo que podría decirse que este fue creado en dos ocasiones.)

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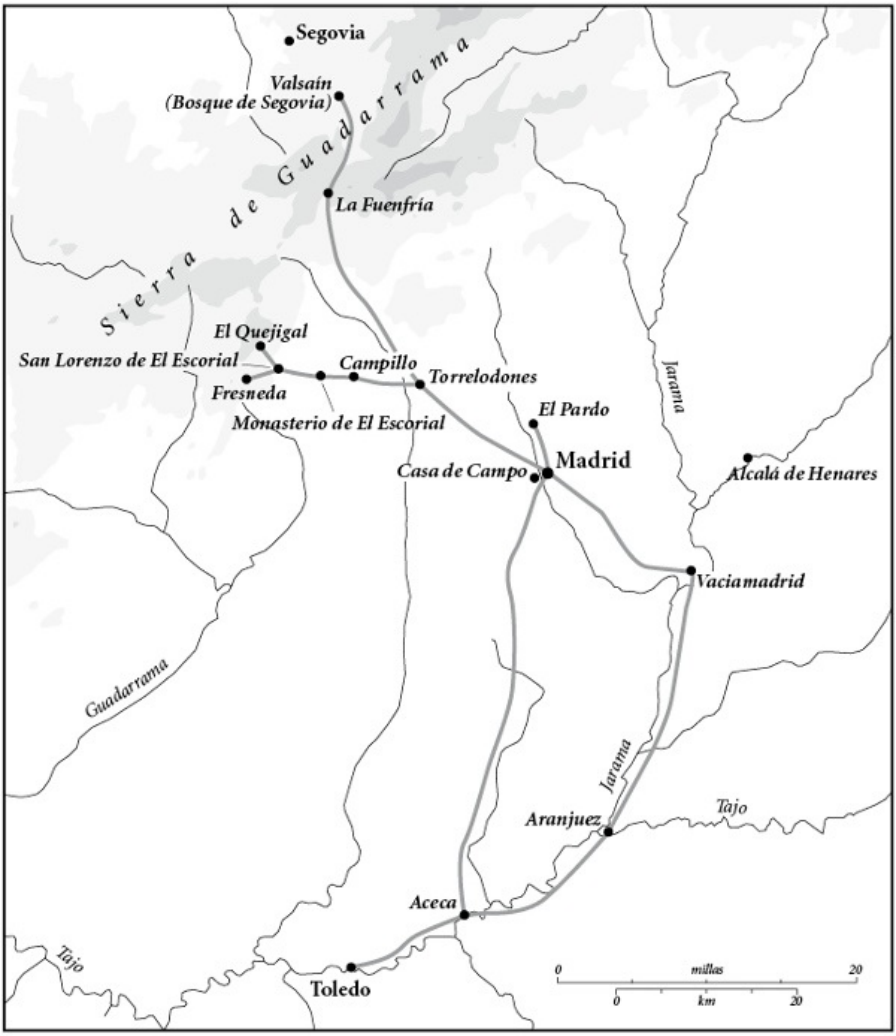

Las casas de campo de Felipe. Felipe hizo construir residencias de descanso hacia la mitad del trayecto entre Madrid y sus principales casas de campo: Aceca, en la ruta a Toledo; Vaciamadrid, camino de Aranjuez; Torrelodones y Fuenfría, hacia el Bosque de Segovia.

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TERCERA PARTE

La primera década del reinado

7. Toma de control, 1558-1561

Un pretendiente mal dispuesto, de nuevo

Dos días después de conocer la muerte de María Tudor en noviembre de 1558, Felipe ordenó eliminar «Inglaterra, Francia e Irlanda» de sus sellos y títulos. También renunció al de «defensor de la fe», conferido a los monarcas de Inglaterra por el papa. En el convento flamenco donde lloraba a su padre, la llegada de tantas malas noticias dejó a Felipe desanimado. Incluso las pequeñas desgracias, como la enfermedad del hermano del conde de Feria, su emisario en Inglaterra, hizo que Felipe se regodeara en la autocompasión: «Nos da gran esperanza su mejoría y espero que Dios le dará salud, si no le haze daño deseársela yo», escribió al conde. Pero nunca dejó de pensar en el futuro. Justo antes de que Feria saliera de Flandes para Londres, Felipe mandó que, si hallaba a María todavía viva, debería hacer otro esfuerzo clandestino para «proponer a Isabel», su cuñada, que se casara con Manuel Filiberto, duque de Saboya; pero si María hubiese muerto, Feria debería proponer a Isabel que se casara enseguida con Felipe, una sugerencia de asombrosa insensatez.[300]

Feria contestó poco después de la muerte de María, comunicando tres noticias inoportunas. Primero, Felipe se había vuelto muy impopular en Inglaterra:

> El pueblo se ha soltado mucho en que la reina que haya gloria envió grandes sumas de dineros a Vuestra Magestad; […] y que a causa de Vuestra Magestad está el reino con tan gran necesidad, y se perdió Calés [Calais]; y que por no venir Vuestra Magestad a ver a la reina, Nuestra Señora, murió de pena.

Segundo, ya que la intransigencia de María y su propia dilación habían privado a Felipe de la oportunidad de tomar parte en la sucesión de Isabel, «la nueva reina y los deste reino se tienen por sueltos de Vuestra Magestad». Tercero, Inglaterra parecía a punto del caos: «Con la mudanza del príncipe, y de

los oficiales, anda tanta baraúnda y confusión que no conocen los padres a los hijos».[301]

A pesar de estos contratiempos, Feria pidió permiso para comunicarle a Isabel la propuesta de matrimonio con Felipe, pero el rey expresó sus dudas: «Mal encamynado veo de cumplirse my deseo, según la dispusición me decís que tenía. No escribo a Isabel» hasta saber si estaba ella dispuesta a recibir tal propuesta. Pero la afabilidad de la nueva reina reanimó a Feria, para quien (en sus propias palabras) el destino del catolicismo en Inglaterra «consiste en el marido que esta mujer tomare, porque si tal cual conuiene, las cosas de la religión irán bien y el reyno quedará amigo a Vuestra Majestad; si no, todo será borrado». Más concretamente, continuaba Feria, «si determina [Isabel] casar fuera del reyno, ella porná ojos en Vuestra Magestad», añadiendo poco diplomáticamente:

> Quando Vuestra Magestad se casó con Su Magestad que aya gloria [María Tudor], lo sintieron françeses en extremo, y también sentirán ahora que Vuestra Magestad se case con esta [Isabel] por su edad y disposición, que estas dos cosas tiene muy mejores que la reyna que haya gloria.

El 14 de diciembre, ni siquiera un mes después de la muerte de María, Feria apuntó a Isabel la posibilidad de casarse con el rey, y la nueva reina inquirió educadamente en qué condiciones estaba pensando Felipe.[302]

En dos cartas ológrafas escritas el 27 de diciembre de 1558, Felipe explicó su dilema. La primera, a Feria, procrastinaba el asunto: en efecto, el rey le instruyó para que ganase tiempo porque no había decidido casarse (o no) con su excuñada:

> Quanto al punto principal de lo que dessea Issabel de mi voluntad cerca deste casamiento, lo que agora os puedo decir es que por ser negoçio de tan grande importancia y consideración, aunque se trató en vuestra presencia, como os deuéis de acordar, quiero mirar y pensar mucho en ello; y entretanto vos procederéis en esto con la reyna […] de manera que ni la deis esperança ni la desconfiéis, sino que se vaya assí entreteniendo el negoçio hasta que yo me determine.

La segunda carta ológrafa, dirigida a Isabel, resultaba

mucho menos ambigua y, de hecho, fue la única ocasión en que el rey expresó amor por una soltera de su edad. Le aseguró «la amistad y verdadera hermandad que con Vuestra Alteza tengo, y [e]l deseo que siempre he tenido de su contentamyento y descanso» y que «no he de tener menos cuydado de sus cosas, siendo de hermana a quien yo quiero tanto, que de las mías propias».[303]

Durante los tres primeros meses de 1559, Felipe firmó sendas cartas en latín dirigidas a la «*Serenissime Principi D. Elisabeth Reginae Angliae, Franciae et Hiberniae etc, Fidei Defensori etc, Sorori & consanguinee nostra charissima*». Resulta llamativo tanto el estilo, el mismo que había empleado con María, como la salutación a la «real persona y estado» de Isabel, porque probaron que Felipe no compartía las dudas sobre su legitimidad que había tenido María (y que tenían otros muchos católicos, incluso el papa). También resulta llamativo el uso de «*Fidei Defensori*», porque indica que Felipe estaba todavía dispuesto a considerar a su «muy cara y muy amada hermana» como católica.[304] Isabel y su «buen hermano» intercambiaron cartas y mensajes sobre tres asuntos: cómo conseguir de los franceses los términos más favorables en la conferencia de paz, que se reanudó en la villa fronteriza de Cateau-Cambrésis en enero de 1559; cómo impedir que el papa declarara a Isabel depuesta, porque no había expresado su sumisión a Roma o por ser hija bastarda; y cómo eludir la reclamación de María Estuardo —católica, reina de Escocia y casada con el heredero al trono francés— sobre ser la legítima sucesora de María Tudor. Sin embargo, ambas partes evitaron cuidadosamente cualquier discusión sobre el matrimonio.

La indecisión de su amo irritó a Feria: «Es menester que Vuestra Magestad tome el negocio con uñas», le amonestó, «y que desde luego comencemos a ver cómo el rey de Francia no entre aquí, ni se destruya la viña que Vuestra Magestad aquí

plantó».[305] Estos dardos dieron en el blanco. El 10 de enero de 1559, después de leer la carta de Feria con mucha atención, Felipe informó a su emisario de que, «habiendo mirado y pensado mucho en ello, aunque se me han ofrecido muchas y grandes dificultades» —que narraba detalladamente—, «me he resuelto determinadamente de hacer este servicio a Dios nuestro señor, y ofrecerle mi voluntad y deseo en casarme con la reina de Inglaterra, y procurarlo por todos los medios que pareciere a propósito, pudiéndose hacer con las condiciones y de la manera que aquí os diré». A continuación, Felipe revelaba tres condiciones no negociables. «La primera y más principal de las cuales es, que vos certifiquéis de la reina que tendrá la religión que yo tengo ahora, que es la que he de tener siempre, y que perseverará en ella, y manterná y conservará ese reino en ella». Segunda, «porque en la capitulación que se hizo con la reina [María Tudor] que está en gloria, se dispuso que estos Estados [de Flandes] se juntasen con ese reino para la herencia del hijo que del casamiento naciere, lo cual pudiera traer consigo grandes inconvenientes, y las podría traer mayores ahora, teniendo el príncipe mi hijo [Don Carlos] los años que tiene […] yo no tengo de venir en él en ninguna manera». Tercera, «por la grande y estrema necesidad que, como está dicho, hay de mi ida a España […] tengo determinado, aunque se concluya este mi casamiento, de estar ahí entendiendo en lo que fuere menester […] y no detenerme más, aunque la reina no se hubiere hecho preñada, pues tiene edad para esperar otra y otras vueltas mías en ese reino». Felipe advirtió la ultrajosa naturaleza de esta última condición, porque añadió por el beneficio de Feria**:** «Aunque esto es lo que me convenía, y conforme a lo que tengo determinado, que es de ir a España (como arriba digo) al fin del verano que viene, aunque sea en una zabra», sin embargo «no conviene que se diga a la reina sino a buena coyuntura, y parece que bastaría después de

concluido el matrimonio».[306]

Si este mensaje sonaba reticente, otra carta a Feria de aquel mismo día —esta vez ológrafa— era glacial:

> Yo os digo que yo no me determynara en lo que allí veréis [en la otra carta] por ninguna cosa del mundo, ni tenporal: para ver si esto estorba a esa señora los propósitos que lleva en la religión lo hago, y por servicio de Dios. Vos me lo haréis muy grande en que lo uno o lo otro se averigüe presto, porque no me cumple estar suspenso agora; y cúmpleme mucho ir a España en qualquier caso. […] Avisadme a menudo de lo que pasare, porque quedo como un hombre sentenciado, esperando lo que a de ser dél. Y creed que tan contento seré de lo uno como de lo otro, porque pues me he ofrecido a Dios, creo que él me hechará a lo que fuere más su servicio.

Dos semanas después de autorizar su propuesta condicional, Felipe seguía poco convencido. Insistió a Feria:

> Si no fuera por Dios, creed que yo no viniera en esto aunque pensara ser señor de cuatro mundos porque por ellos no querría perder el cielo […]. Y así nada me hará ni hiziera hazer esto sino ver claro que se gana este reyno para su servicio y religión que otra cosa yo no la pretendo de aquí sino esta.[307]

La falta de entusiasmo de Isabel igualaba a la de su maldispuesto pretendiente. Mientras la propuesta de Felipe estuviera sobre la mesa, él estaría obligado a defenderla a ella y a su reino contra los franceses y sus aliados escoceses. Aunque siempre se dirigía a Felipe como «*fratre consanguineo et amico nostro charissimo*» en su correspondencia oficial, se negaba a renovar la sumisión de Inglaterra a Roma o a asistir a misa, signos inequívocos de que no tenía intención de cumplir con la primera de las condiciones no negociables de Felipe: que ella y su reino siguieran siendo católicos. En marzo de 1559, la reina rechazó firmemente la proposición de Felipe. Aseguró a Feria en una audiencia «que no tenía [ella] voluntad de casarse»; «que bien veía que convenía este casamiento a su honor y a la conservación deste y desos estados [Flandes], pero que a entrambas cosas se podía satisfacer con conservar buena amistad con Vuestra Majestad»; y «últimamente, que diversas personas le habían dicho que Su Majestad habia de venir aquí a casarse

con ella e irse luego a España».[308]

En su informe al rey sobre la audiencia, Feria sugirió posibles estrategias para convertir el «no» de Isabel en un «sí»; pero Felipe había anticipado este resultado. «He entendido la resolución de la reina en lo de su casamiento», respondió enseguida cuando recibió la carta de Feria, y continuaba con evidente falta de sinceridad: «Y aunque no he podido dejar de recibir pena de que no se haya venido a concluir esto, que yo tanto deseaba, yo he quedado satisfecho, y muy contento de lo que ella se contenta».[309] Omitió informar a Feria de que aquel día se sentía «muy contento» porque ahora estaba libre para casarse con otra Isabel.

La muerte de María Tudor trajo consigo tanto ganancias como pérdidas. Por un lado, adelantaba las negociaciones de paz con Francia. La victoria de Gravelinas *(véase capítulo 3)* ya había demostrado que los Países Bajos podían ser defendidos sin el control de Calais por parte de los ingleses: ahora, liberado de la necesidad de pacificar a su esposa y sus súbditos ingleses, «no era razón que por una plaza se dejase d'azer la paz, y que antes que se quedasen con Calés [Calais] los franceses».[310] Por otro lado, en un esfuerzo por acelerar las conversaciones de paz, Enrique II de Francia había ofrecido la mano de su hija mayor Isabel al príncipe don Carlos, como forma de reconciliar a las dos dinastías. Felipe estaba de acuerdo, pero, en cuanto quedó soltero de nuevo, Enrique insistió en que su hija se casara con el propio rey. El 23 de marzo de 1559, el mismo día en que llegó la noticia de la negativa de Isabel Tudor, los plenipotenciarios de Felipe informaron a los franceses de que «quisiese Su Majestad casarse en lugar del príncipe nuestro señor con la hija primogénita del rey de Francia, pidiendo que fuese sobre las mesmas condiciones y artículos que para el dicho señor príncipe se havía concertado».[311]

La paz firmada en Cateau-Cambrésis el 3 de abril de 1559 aseguraba este matrimonio, y también casi todos los objetivos que Carlos V había dejado marcados a su hijo en su «testamento político» una década antes *(véase capítulo 2)*. Es cierto que Enrique II obtenía algunos beneficios del tratado, pero no a costa de Felipe: consiguió Calais de Inglaterra; mantenía los tres enclaves imperiales en Lorena arrebatados al Sacro Imperio Romano en 1552; y obtenía el derecho a guarnecer algunas bases en los territorios italianos del duque de Saboya. Pero, aunque en los Países Bajos ambas partes devolvían todas sus conquistas, en Italia Enrique II no solo cedía casi todos los derechos y posesiones reclamados por Felipe, sino que, además, debía retirar sus tropas de los territorios de los principales aliados españoles: Saboya, Mantua y Génova.

¿España, Flandes o Inglaterra?

La Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis fortaleció, en ese momento, enormemente la posición de Felipe en el continente, pero reducía en la misma medida su capacidad de influir en los asuntos de Inglaterra, especialmente sobre los religiosos. Poco antes de aprobar las condiciones de paz definitivas, el rey contemplaba la posibilidad de prolongar la lucha con Francia hasta que pudiera estar seguro de que Inglaterra seguiría siendo católica. Confesó a Feria: «Cierto es el negocio que más apretado me a tenido en my vida» (una frase que utilizaría en varias ocasiones más durante su reinado). El rey tenía miedo de un triunfo protestante tanto en Inglaterra como en los Países Bajos. «Yo temo mucho», le confesaba a Feria, «que si no es por medio della [paz], que estos estados [los Países Bajos] se pondrán tan mal como ese reyno». Felipe proseguía:

> Y duéleme mucho ver lo que ahy pasa, y no poderle dar el remedio que yo quería, y los que puedo parecen más flacos de lo que tan gran maldad merece […]. Rompérseme la paz que tanto avemos procurado, y esto por una parte, y

por otra desear perdello todo, y darlo por bien empleado por remediar la maldad de lo que pasa en ese reyno [de Inglaterra], me tiene en la congoxa y confusión que digo.

Cansado, el rey añadía: «Yo no deseo ni tengo otro fin sino de azertar» (otra expresión que también usaba con frecuencia) y «plega a Dios que así se haga como yo lo deseo, mas estoy muy pudrido que tras desear yo esto tanto se yerre muchas vezes que está el mundo desta manera».[312]

Felipe solo cambió su postura cuando Isabel rompió abiertamente con Roma, y Paulo IV dio su aprobación para que Felipe invadiese Inglaterra y derrocara a Isabel —«obra tan digna de rey católico»—, prometiendo investirle, en caso de que la invasión triunfara, como rey de Inglaterra de nuevo.[313] Pero ¿podría Felipe aceptar? Sus ministros en España le bombardeaban con advertencias de que se enfrentaban a desafíos que podían superarles a menos que él regresara; y, como le confió a Feria, temía que «si no voy presto, no hallaré después tierra en que hazerlo. Y por esto es menester abreviar los negocios de ahí». La tensión de luchar con estas alternativas incompatibles dejó al rey exhausto. A finales de junio de 1559 le dijo a Granvela, en una inusual delegación de poder, «si viniere alguna carta de priessa acá, la podréys abrir» y «escrivídmelo» al mismo convento a las afueras de Bruselas donde había llorado la muerte de su padre y de su esposa, «adonde me voy mañana de mañana a escrivir y a entender en otras cosas, que aquí no me dexan; y también a procurar salud, que traygo gran miedo que me ha de faltar, que no ando bueno estos días».[314]

En el curso de su largo reinado, durante los periodos de crisis Felipe se retiraba con frecuencia «a entender en otras cosas, que aquí no me dexan», a veces durante semanas; pero en aquella ocasión, una noticia de París le sacó de su retiro súbitamente. Durante unas justas para celebrar la paz, Enrique

II recibió una grave herida en la cabeza que le ocasionaría la muerte el 10 de julio de 1559. Su hijo Francisco, que ya era rey de Escocia gracias a su matrimonio con María Estuardo, se convirtió también en rey de Francia. Felipe y sus ministros enseguida valoraron el impacto de este dramático hecho sobre si el rey debía o no continuar en los Países Bajos. Como señaló Granvela a Juan Vázquez de Molina, que permanecía en España, si el rey se marchaba sin esperar «hasta que se diesse algún remedio a las cosas de aquí, y se assentassen mejor las pazes»,

> no veo que los Estados de aquí otorgaran tan presto lo que deven dar, y a no hazerlo no se acabara en absencia […] y teniendo successos tales que podrian traher daño sin remedio a Su Magestad y su posteridad. Y no puede ser bien dexar esto, quedando lo de Inglaterra como está y lo de Francia no assentado. No sé si es tanta la necessidad que ay en España que sea mayor que esto.[315]

Granvela había puesto el dedo en el dilema clave al que ahora se enfrentaba Felipe II: casi una década de guerra había dejado todos sus dominios exhaustos, pero ¿cuáles de ellos necesitarían más su presencia? Más concretamente, como expresó con clarividencia el embajador inglés en la corte de Felipe: «Cuando él se haya ido, puede ocurrir que mientras él se preocupa por mantener España inaccesible al protestantismo, a su regreso a Flandes este haya avanzado mucho».[316] Es decir, salir para España suponía perder no solamente Inglaterra, sino también Flandes. Pero el rey acababa de recibir una carta tremenda enviada por su regente, Juana, en la que se ofrecía el argumento opuesto.

La princesa empezaba señalando que los elevados impuestos, los problemas en el comercio y las malas cosechas habían empobrecido a toda España; que muchas partes de Aragón estaban al borde de una insurrección abierta; y que en Sevilla, Valladolid y otras ciudades se habían descubierto células protestantes, lo que demostraba que la herejía había penetrado en el corazón de la monarquía. Sobre todo, insistía Juana, la

Real Hacienda estaba vacía, a pesar de la bancarrota de 1557 *(véase capítulo 3)*, y la situación era esta: unos ingresos anuales de un millón y medio de ducados —ya comprometidos para 1559, 1560 y parte de 1561— y obligaciones inmediatas de gastar más de cuatro millones en defensa y pagos de los intereses sobre una deuda total de veinticinco millones de ducados. Por tanto, continuaba Juana sin dar tregua,

> no solamente no puede ser Vuestra Magestad proueydo [de España] de tan gran suma como dize ser menester, pero de ninguna cosa por pequeña que fuesse; ni ay manera para cumplir los gastos ordinarios destos reynos tan neçesarios y forçosos. Y que lo que más conuiene al serviçio de Vuestra Magestad es que se venga a estos reynos con la breuedad que tiene entendida y tantas vezes se ha scripto. Que venido Vuestra Magestad a ellos, con su presençia espero en Nuestro Señor que con su ayuda podrá dar mejor orden assy para socorrer lo de allá como remediar lo de acá, que no se puede hazer en su ausencia.

Mientras leía el aluvión de reproches que seguían a continuación, las mejillas de Felipe debieron de sonrojarse, porque escribió al margen: «No se vea en Consejo, ni mostréis a nadie este capítulo» porque «de algunas cosas», confesaba, «sé que han reydo allá harto». Al final, concluía con amargura: «No quiero aprovecharme estas cosas, sino de hazer lo que sé que más me combiene, qu[e] es irme [a España] sin andar aprovechándome del parecer de nadie».[317]

Desde luego, Felipe centró su atención en «azertar» al preparar su viaje. Envió a España a dos de sus más experimentados consejeros con una lista de reformas urgentes: Juana debía convocar una junta de expertos, «y por ser los negocios que son, conviene tratarse con secreto, y que en ninguna manera se entienda ni publique cosa alguna». La lista incluía cómo mejorar las defensas de España (galeras, fortificaciones, municiones); qué «obras públicas» (puertos y muelles, puentes y caminos así como alhóndigas) estaban previstas o en proceso de construcción; cómo mejorar la navegación de los ríos y regadíos; cómo incrementar la

producción (especialmente la crianza de ganado y la industria de los paños); cómo acabar con las importaciones de telas, papel «y otros algunos» en favor de la producción autóctona; y cómo aumentar los ingresos y reducir la deuda. Esto representaba un «acertado» (e insólito) ensayo de planificación, y la junta debía comenzar sus reuniones de inmediato «para que llegado yo, y entendido lo que resulta de lo que ovieren tratado y entendido, se prouea y ordene como convenga».[318]

Resultaba mucho menos fácil reorganizar «los negocios» de los Países Bajos, a pesar de recibir algunos últimos consejos de su padre. El íntimo compañero del emperador, Luis Quijada, avisó a Felipe de que, justo antes de morir, Carlos había revelado lo que pensaba que debería hacer su hijo en Flandes «haziendo Vuestra Magestad ausencia dél»:

> Que se hiziese un consejo de las personas que más a propósito fuesen y pareciesen convenir, y que tubiesen más yspirencia en las cosas de la guerra de los Estados, y que el duque de Saboya se gobernase con el parecer de tal consejo, como se hizo en estos reynos quando Su Magestad dejo gobernadores para ello, aunque también me dijo que era necesario pensar mucho en las personas, porque en algunas ponía dificultad.[319]

El rey siguió esta intuición de su padre lo mejor que pudo. El primer obstáculo al que se enfrentó fue la negativa del duque de Saboya a permanecer como gobernador. Tras la Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis, los franceses abandonaron sus tierras y, lógicamente, Manuel Filiberto insistió en regresar a su casa. Felipe tuvo, por tanto, que encontrar a otro pariente cercano, y por fin eligió a la duquesa Margarita de Parma, hija ilegítima del difunto emperador, que carecía de cualquier experiencia política o administrativa. Felipe intentó remediar la inexperiencia de su medio hermana de tres maneras. Primero, como había hecho con Juana cinco años antes *(véase capítulo 2)*, pasó varias semanas instruyéndola personalmente sobre sus metas generales y cómo ella podía ayudar a conseguirlas. En segundo lugar, dictó unas detalladas instrucciones que dejaban

a Margarita poco espacio para maniobrar, exigiendo que la duquesa le consultara antes de tomar ninguna decisión. Finalmente, siguiendo el aviso de su padre, Felipe creó «un consejo de las personas que más a propósito fuesen y pareciesen convenir». A pesar de que el emperador había muerto antes de poder ayudar a su hijo a «pensar mucho en las personas, porque en algunas ponía dificultad», Felipe eligió consejeros experimentados con ambiciones complementarias, como el conde Lamoral de Egmont, el vencedor de Gravelinas, quien ostentaba un gran prestigio militar, y el príncipe Guillermo de Orange. Ambos combinaban la experiencia diplomática con amplios contactos internacionales: Egmont había pasado tiempo en Inglaterra y España negociando el matrimonio con María Tudor, mientras que Orange había ayudado a negociar la Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis. Además, los dos tenían numerosos parientes en Alemania. Por encima de todos ellos estaba el veterano Antonio Perrenot de Granvela, que ya había realizado delicadas misiones diplomáticas y administrativas para el emperador. Granvela conocía a prácticamente todos los líderes laicos y espirituales de Europa; durante su estancia en los Países Bajos, Felipe le consultó diariamente sobre los temas de Estado y, años después de su marcha, seguía comunicando órdenes importantes a sus demás ministros en Bruselas a través del obispo.

Las dificultades a las que Margarita y Granvela se enfrentarían a raíz de la marcha del rey pudieron vislumbrarse ya en Gante en julio de 1559, cuando por primera vez Felipe ejerció sus poderes como «soberano» de la orden del Toisón de Oro para convocar una reunión de sus caballeros. Estas reuniones solían ser siempre bulliciosas, porque en ellas el «soberano» y los caballeros efectuaban una crítica formal unos de otros sobre su respectivo comportamiento desde la última reunión. Esta vez, según su propia versión, Felipe levantó un

gran revuelo al pedirle a los caballeros que hicieran tres cosas: «El uno, que no eligan sino católico y no sospechoso; el otro, que en sus tierras tengan gran cuydado de castigar lo de la religión por aquí adelante en quanto pudieren; y el otro que oyan misa cada día, no teniendo notable incombeniente». Aunque casi todos aceptaron el primero, algunos se opusieron al segundo (basándose en que sobre ello ya existía una legislación adecuada, y que por tanto este requerimiento ponía en cuestión su devoción) y «al tercero contradicen aún más, diciendo que ya como cristianos tienen aquella obligación».[320] Finalmente, Felipe abandonó la pelea y fue a reunirse con la flota congregada en Zelanda (Zeeland) para que le llevara de vuelta a España.

Mientras esperaba vientos favorables, Felipe se sintió contento. Informó a Granvela: «Yo estoy bien, y lo he estado después que vine, al andar por aquellas yslas donde havía más manera de hazer exercicio me dio la vida». Sin embargo, la ansiedad y la angustia seguían latentes, ya que:

> Me parece dañosíssima la dilación de my yda, mas como no dependa sino de la voluntad de Dios, no hay que hazer sino esperar lo que Él será más servido. Y yo espero en Él que, pues me ha sacado de otros barrancos mayores, me sacará también deste, y me dará forma para que yo entretenga mis estados y no se me pierdan por no tener forma para entretenellos, que sería la más triste cosa para mí y que yo sentiría de quantas se pueden pensar, y mucho más que si los perdiesse en una batalla. Pero por más apretado que sea este negocio, es menester esforçarnos y hazer quanto se pudiere, y assí lo pienso hazer en España, y por esto siento la dilación de la yda, que por lo demás yo os prometo que voy teniendo hartos pesadumbres que allá ha de tener.

Al día siguiente, el 25 de agosto de 1559, zarpó de los Países Bajos hacia España. Nunca más volvería.[321]

Herejía en casa

Entre las «hartas pesadumbres» que preocupaban a Felipe se incluía la evidencia de que había actividad protestante en la península ibérica. En mayo de 1558, don Fernando de Valdés,

arzobispo de Sevilla e inquisidor general, le envió un informe a Felipe sobre cómo la situación religiosa se había deteriorado «después que Vuestra Majestad de estos reinos partió» (palabras que sin duda no fueron elegidas al azar). Comenzaba con la «mucha cuantidad de Biblias y otros libros de la Sagrada Escriptura muy contaminados y mezclados de opiniones luteranas» que en Salamanca «como en otros muchos lugares de estos reinos se hallaron, así en personas particulares como en conventos y universidades». A continuación describía una «alteración de los moriscos» en Aragón y un resurgimiento del judaísmo en Murcia antes de referirse al «gran número de luteranos» arrestados en Sevilla y en «Valladolid, Salamanca, Zamora, Toro, Palencia y Logroño y otros lugares».[322]

En los lejanos Países Bajos, Felipe no parecía ser consciente de la gravedad de estos acontecimientos. Seis meses más tarde, escribiendo «del Campo», le aseguraba a Valdés que «en ninguna cosa me podréis dar mayor satisfacción y contentamiento, procediendo con todo rigor contra los que están presos, de manera que ataje y castigue con ningún respecto tan gran mal», pero seguía diciendo que, «[para que] no haya dilación en lo que fuere menester, con enviármelo a consultar acá, estando en la guerra», su inquisidor general debía «[dar] cuenta particular a Su Magestad [Carlos] destos negocios, siendo cierto terná por bien de tomar trabajo en oírlos, proveer y determinar lo que conviniere».[323]

Valdés no tenía intención de esperar órdenes procedentes de Yuste. En cambio, se esforzó por convencer a la regente Juana de que, pues «la áncora de la fe y estado real» en España siempre había sido, «en tiempos tan peligrosos, la Inquisición», el Santo Oficio necesitaba ahora nuevos y más amplios poderes. Valdés decidió asimismo explicar la gravedad de la situación al papa, enviándole una larga relación donde detallaba su éxito al descubrir a «gran número de luteranos», y solicitaba breves que

permitieran a la Inquisición perseguir y procesar a los sospechosos incluso del más alto nivel. Valdés entregó su relación, junto con algunas peticiones especiales, a un sobrino de su confianza, con órdenes de que se las revelara únicamente al papa Paulo IV, a solas y en audiencia privada. Ni él ni Juana enviaron ninguna copia de la relación a Felipe, ni tampoco revelaron que uno de los breves solicitados por Valdés permitiría a la Inquisición reunir información sobre todos los «obispos, arzobispos, patriarcas y primados residentes en España» que fueran sospechosos de luteranismo, así como arrestar y encarcelar por procedimiento sumarísimo a cualesquiera de estos prelados en caso de que trataran de «huir o ausentarse de otra manera del reino».[324]

La petición tenía una meta específica. Valdés y la princesa ya habían puesto sus miras en fray Bartolomé de Carranza, artífice de la recatolización de Inglaterra, a quien el rey había nombrado arzobispo de Toledo y —lo que Valdés ignoraba— gobernador de España y tutor de don Carlos en caso de fallecimiento del rey.[325] Los señores inquisidores no perdieron tiempo. Interrogaron sistemáticamente a todos los «luteranos» ya en sus cárceles sobre sus contactos con Carranza, llevando a algunos a la «cámara de el tormento» para hacerles hablar. También pidieron a numerosos obispos y teólogos que leyeran y evaluaran la ortodoxia de los escritos de Carranza, especialmente de su *Catechismo*, publicado aquel mismo año para convencer a los protestantes de Inglaterra.

Felipe no intervino directamente en el asunto de Carranza hasta diciembre de 1558, cuando le escribió a Juana que instara a la Suprema y General Inquisición a «que castiguen muy bien y con gran rigor estas herejías que escriben que allá hay, y que no dejen de hacer ninguna cosa de las que para esto convengan, y toque a quien tocare, aunque sea el príncipe».[326] Sin embargo, el rey todavía veía las acusaciones y contraacusaciones

respecto a Carranza como lo que eran: una de las «paçiones, parcyalydades y casy vandos que se hacían o están hechos entre mis criados» sobre las que Carlos V le había advertido *(véase capítulo 1)*. En abril de 1559 concedió una audiencia a solas a fray Hernando de San Ambrosio, enviado personal de Carranza. El fraile informó después a su señor que «de su respuesta conocí lo mucho que a Vuestra Señoría quiere [Su Magestad], y que no han bastado cosas que se hayan escrito ni dicho, para quitar la gran opinión que de Vuestra Señoría tiene». Es cierto: aunque cuando fray Hernando pidió, de parte de Carranza, permiso para acudir al papa en busca de apoyo contra sus enemigos, el rey rotundamente lo negó, pero de inmediato escribió una carta para tranquilizar a su primado. Incluyó una referencia específica a la hostilidad de la Inquisición hacia el arzobispo y su *Catechismo*, y prometió una respuesta completa en breve. «Y entretanto os ruego mucho que no hagáis mudança de lo que hasta aquí avéys hecho, ni acudáis a otra parte que a mí».[327] Felipe era un maestro de la «dissimulación», y la calidez y el tono íntimo de esta carta confirman la impresión producida en fray Hernando de que en ese momento el rey todavía tenía una «gran opinión» de Carranza.

No obstante, fray Bartolomé siguió inquieto. Compartió con Felipe su temor de que Valdés «y los que están con él, tomen el oficio de la Inquisición por instrumento para ejecutar sus voluntades o vengar sus pasiones», añadiendo que «si pudiera, él me hiciera hereje».[328] Tenía razón. Valdés acababa de recibir el breve que había solicitado del papa, autorizando a la Suprema a proceder contra cualquier prelado sospechoso de herejía, y pronto convocó una junta «para veer y examinar lo que ha resultado en el Sancto Oficio» contra Carranza. Los inquisidores elaboraron un informe detallado para Felipe en el que se referían las numerosas pruebas de herejía: entre los ya

condenados por luteranismo se incluían amigos y discípulos de Carranza, varios de los cuales le habían denunciado (él, en cambio, no había denunciado a ninguno de ellos). Además, muchos teólogos consultados por Valdés afirmaban haber encontrado ideas y frases protestantes en su *Catechismo*. Finalmente, recurrían al más puro chantaje, aprovechando dos de las preocupaciones de Felipe: su conciencia y su autoridad. Si Felipe no aprobaba el arresto y Carranza lograba

> procurar que todos sigan sus falsas opiniones e herejías, e la conciencia e reputación de Vuestra Majestad no sabemos cómo quedaría saneada demás del peligro que podría haber en lo que toca al Estado e demás, que esto al cabo ha de venir a manos del papa e no sabemos cómo lo tomaría ni en que pararía el negocio.

La Suprema llegó a sugerir una ingeniosa treta «para prenderle»: enviar a Carranza una carta «haciéndole venir a esta corte por mandado de Vuestra Majestad o de la Serenísima Princesa e deteniéndole en la casa en que fuera aposentado».[329]

Las demandas de la Suprema situaban al rey en una posición imposible: o mantener la autoridad de la Inquisición, o salvar al arzobispo de Toledo, pero hacer las dos cosas era imposible. Su respuesta, fechada el 26 de junio de 1559, «sobre el negocio del arzobispo de Toledo», demostró que el chantaje había triunfado. Felipe autorizó a la Suprema para «que proceda en este e los otros negocios con el rigor que la cualidad de estos negocios requiere, sin tener otro respecto sino solo el servicio de nuestro Señor e bien de esos reinos que Dios me ha dado a cargo, e a descargar mi conciencia». También aprobó la ingeniosa treta.[330] Al recibir la carta de su hermano, Juana informó a Carranza de que «convendría al servicio de Dios e [del Rey] que os hallásedes en esta villa de Valladolid para algunos negocios muy importantes que os he de comunicar», añadiendo que «tendré mucho contentamiento que sea luego, aunque vengáis a la lijera, que en lo de vuestro aposento se proveerá luego como conviene». Como el arzobispo tardaba en

llegar, una madrugada entraron funcionarios de la Inquisición en la habitación donde Carranza dormía «y le dixieron fuese preso por el Santo Oficio». Cuando la partida inquisitorial llegó a Valladolid, Carranza descubrió el significado de la promesa de Juana de que «vuestro aposento se proveerá luego como conviene». La Inquisición le recluyó bajo vigilancia en una pequeña cámara. Por si alguien dudaba de su último destino, el Santo Oficio subastó todos los bienes personales del primado en la plaza mayor de la ciudad.[331]

Aunque Felipe había aprobado el arresto de Carranza, es posible que no se diera cuenta de que esto solo formaba parte de un exhaustivo plan elaborado por Valdés para controlar la vida intelectual española. En abril de 1559, el inquisidor general emitió un mandamiento de «que nenguna persona, universidad ni colegio de cualquier estado, dignidad, condición que sea, dé censura y parescer cerca de ningún libro de cualquier facultad que sea, sin que primero presente la dicha censura y parescer en el Consejo de la General Inquisición». Esta ampliación sin precedentes de la autoridad de la Suprema también anunciaba una lista de casi setecientos «libros que se han de prohibir en el catálogo que por Nos está mandado hacer».[332] En octubre, pocos días después de su llegada a Valladolid, se celebró un gran auto de fe. «Fue muy solemne», recordaba un testigo de vista, «por hallarse presente en él el Rey nuestro señor con toda su majestad, el cual públicamente, estando en pie y la gorra quitada, hizo juramento en manos del Inquisidor General que favorecería las cosas de la fee católica y a sus ministros». Una multitud de alrededor de doscientas mil personas presenciaron este significativo acto, escucharon las sentencias y vieron cómo se llevaban a algunos de los reos para ser quemados vivos. Según el cronista Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, cuando uno de ellos le reprochó al rey que permitiera que lo quemaran en la hoguera, Felipe respondió: «Yo traería

leña para quemar a mi hijo, si fuere tan malo como vos».[333]

En noviembre de 1559, el rey firmó otra iniciativa redactada por Valdés para erradicar la herejía: una pragmática para que «de aquí adelante ninguno de los nuestros súbditos y naturales, eclesiásticos y seglares, frailes y clérigos ni otros algunos, no puedan ir ni salir de estos reinos a estudiar, ni enseñar, ni aprender, ni estar, ni residir en universidades, estudios ni colegios fuera de estos reinos». Este documento daba cuatro meses de plazo a los estudiantes que en ese momento se encontraban en el extranjero para volver a España si no querían perder todas sus «temporalidades» (en el caso de los clérigos) y «bienes» (en el caso de los seglares); mientras que «los grados y cursos» de aquellos que a partir de entonces estudiaran en el extranjero «no les valgan ni puedan valer […] para ninguna cosa ni efecto alguno».[334]

Sería difícil exagerar el impacto acumulativo de las medidas concebidas por Valdés y promulgadas por Felipe y su hermana en 1558-1559. Ciertamente, sirvieron para atajar la práctica del protestantismo en España: ya no habría más «conventos de luteranos» y la circulación de libros heréticos sería escasa, pero el precio que se pagó por mantener las tierras del Rey Católico libres de herejía fue muy alto. A partir de 1559, y en nombre de Felipe, surgió lo que Marcel Bataillon denominó un «cordón sanitario»: sin la expresa aprobación de la Inquisición, no se permitía la entrada de ninguna idea ni la salida de ningún intelectual. Por otra parte, dentro de España, la avalancha de arrestos y acusaciones condujo a que nadie —ni clérigo ni seglar— pudiera expresar sin temor opinión alguna en materia de religión. En palabras del conde de Feria (todavía en los Países Bajos): «Lo de allá [España] anda de mala manera, porque ha de venir la cosa que no sepamos cuáles se han de tener por cristianos o cuáles por herejes»; y, por tanto, opinaba, en lo referente a la religión «es mejor callar».[335] Estaba en lo

cierto: entre 1560 y 1562 más de cien personas de alto rango, Feria entre ellos, tuvieron que testificar en persona y bajo juramento ante la Inquisición en el proceso de Carranza. También lo haría Felipe, en dos ocasiones.

El proceso del siglo

El 4 de septiembre de 1559, una semana después de que el arzobispo Carranza entrara bajo custodia en Valladolid (y cuatro días antes de que Felipe regresara a la ciudad), Valdés se enfrentó a su víctima en persona y le exigió una confesión completa de culpabilidad. Para su sorpresa, el primado señaló que el papa Paulo había muerto algunos días antes de su arresto, por lo que el breve no era válido. Y lo que aún era más perjudicial para los intereses de Valdés, Carranza afirmó que los propios protocolos de la Inquisición exigían un juez que fuera «hombre desapasionado e no sospechoso; e porque el señor arçobispo de Sevilla [Valdés], que está presente, ha estado y está apassionado, e no solamente sospechoso, pero enemigo declarado contra su persona e sus cosas», Carranza, «como es de derecho y de justicia, le recusa por juez». Más tarde, presentó veinticinco «capítulos de recusación» alegando que no solo el inquisidor general, sino también otros dos miembros de la Suprema «me tienen odio» y también debían apartarse del caso. El acusado se convertía así en acusador.[336]

Carranza poseía una memoria extraordinaria que le permitía recordar su pasado con gran precisión: lugares, fechas y personas; opiniones, discursos y sermones; relaciones con un gran número de personas en España e Italia, Trento, Inglaterra y Flandes. Aunque en ocasiones se mostró vago y evasivo (después de todo, se jugaba la vida), consiguió recrear con detalle y sorprendente precisión todo lo que le había ocurrido hasta el mismo momento de su arresto. Además, Carranza había trabajado para la Inquisición durante veinticinco años y

sabía exactamente cómo utilizar en beneficio propio sus procedimientos habituales. En primer lugar, aunque los inquisidores ocultaron a cada reo la identidad de sus acusadores, cada uno tenía el derecho de impugnar testimonios adversos demostrando que un potencial acusador era «enemigo capital» y, por tanto, no debía ser creído. En el caso de Carranza, sus «tachas» impugnaron a más de treinta personas (casi todas las cuales habían, en efecto, testificado contra él). Además, la Inquisición permitía a todos los reos presentar pruebas que refutaran determinados cargos de herejía u ofreciesen un contexto de inocencia para los comentarios sospechosos (indirectas). Finalmente, los reos podían presentar pruebas de las cosas buenas que habían hecho a lo largo de su vida (abonos): el arzobispo citaba testigos de su piedad, pobreza y humildad, sus limosnas y actos caritativos y, sobre todo, su entusiasta persecución de herejes tanto en Inglaterra como en los Países Bajos. Carranza elaboró varias listas de preguntas y designó a quién debía la Inquisición formularle cada una. Una vez más, respecto a varios asuntos, «da Su Señoría por testigo al rey don Felipe, nuestro señor».[337]

En enero de 1560, dos inquisidores y su secretario se presentaron en palacio con cinco «preguntas a que a de declarar Su Magestad el Rey, nuestro señor, siendo servido dello». Esta era quizá la primera vez que Felipe había sido interrogado desde las entrometidas preguntas sobre su vida sexual que su padre le formuló cuando era adolescente *(véase capítulo 1)* y optó por estudiar las preguntas en privado y presentar una respuesta por escrito. «Yo no puedo saver si por esto o otra causa aya odio o enemistad entre ellos», escribió evasivamente, «pues si la ha avido sería dentro de sus pensamyentos, lo que nadie no puede juzgar ni afirmar por cierto» [véase lámina 26].[338] Dos años más tarde, los inquisidores volvieron y le preguntaron al rey en persona si él había escuchado ciertos sermones pronunciados por Carranza

en la capilla real de Bruselas en 1558, y si «la doctrina que se enseñó fue buena y cathólica, sin que nadie recibiesse escándolo della». Felipe dictó su respuesta con evidente irritación: «En los sermones que oyó al dicho arçobispo los años de 58 y 57, nunca lo oyó cosa que escandalize a Su Magestad ni a nadie, y que *como Su Magestad no es theólogo* esto sabe desta pregunta y no otra cosa». Al releerle el notario su respuesta, Felipe volvió a pensarse la frase en cursiva e hizo que la tacharan antes de firmar «Yo el Rey» al pie de su declaración.[339] Pronto, los inquisidores volvieron para formularle un interrogatorio más largo, y sobre muchas preguntas el rey se expresó elocuente y favorablemente. Respecto al contenido de los sermones de Carranza, reiteró que «nunca oyó cosa que dixese el arçobispo que escandaliçase nadie». Sobre su trabajo en Inglaterra, dijo que «a lo que Su Magestad cree, hizo mucho fructo en lo de la religión», y cuando «Su Magestad mandava juntar al dicho arçobispo con otros» para tratar los asuntos religiosos en Inglaterra, «a lo que Su Magestad entendió, siempre dava su voto como cathólico cristiano».[340]

Poco a poco, Felipe se dio cuenta de que Valdés actuaba por «pasiones», como Carranza insinuó, y en 1566 le suspendió de su cargo de inquisidor general. Pero no iría más lejos: el proceso de Carranza ponía en juego la credibilidad y la autoridad del Santo Oficio, y el rey difícilmente podía desafiar a la institución a favor de la cual tan rotundamente y tantas veces había declarado su apoyo. Desde el momento en que aprobó el plan de Valdés para arrestar y encarcelar a Carranza, el rey necesitaba una condena tan desesperadamente como la Suprema, y durante diecisiete años luchó por conseguir este objetivo, pero fue en vano. En 1567, a pesar de los denodados esfuerzos de Felipe, el papa Pío V convocó a Carranza a Roma para continuar su proceso allí. Al pasar los años, los temores del rey a una absolución lo llevaron a bombardear tanto a Pío

como a su sucesor con advertencias de lo que

> en todo el mundo se diría quando este proceso se imprimiese y se publique, si culpas tan graves y manifestas consideradas por todos los perlados de España pasasen sin castigo, aviéndose dado dellos tan plena noticia a Su Santidad, y el triunpho que sería para los herejes, si viesen que quien ha tenido, engañado y escrito su falsa doctrina, fuese dado por libre en esa Santa Sede.

Cuando Gregorio XIII anunció la relativamente benévola sentencia de Carranza en 1576 —cinco años de suspensión de su dignidad—, el rey se indignó y protestó con vehemencia, afirmando que «debía ser más rigurosa según las calidades del proceso». Solo la muerte del arzobispo, acaecida dos semanas después, puso fin a la discusión (y a la perspectiva de que pudiera intentar regresar a Toledo).[341]

De Valladolid a Madrid por Toledo

El 9 de octubre de 1559, al día siguiente de haber presidido el gran auto de fe, Felipe salió de Valladolid y ordenó que el gobierno central se estableciese en Toledo. Según Cabrera de Córdoba, esta decisión reflejaba la indignación del rey ante el hecho de que la herejía hubiera contaminado a la capital administrativa, y quizá fuese un factor importante, pero estaba claro que el gobierno no podía permanecer en Valladolid. En agosto de 1558, Juana informó a su hermano de que, tras cinco años de residencia continuada, «y de haber tanta gente aquí, y tanta conversación, hay muchos males, que nadie los puede imaginar». Juana prefería Madrid como nueva capital administrativa y, en su defecto, Guadalajara, Toledo o Burgos.[342] Durante su primer año en España tras su regreso, Felipe visitaría cada una de estas ciudades; pero, antes de salir de Valladolid, llevaría a cabo una delicada e importante tarea: acoger en el seno de la familia real a un medio hermano hasta entonces desconocido para él.

En febrero de 1547, en Alemania, Bárbara Blomberg dio a luz a un hijo de Carlos V *(véase capítulo 2)*. En marcado

contraste con las tres hijas ilegítimas nacidas antes de su matrimonio, cuyas vidas tuvo constantemente bajo control, el emperador rara vez admitió ser el padre del niño. Incluso llegó a no mencionarle en su último testamento, ejecutado en 1554 y de cuarenta y cinco páginas de extensión; pero sí redactó una cláusula especial dirigida a Felipe —y, en su defecto, a don Carlos— dedicada a un niño llamado Jerónimo. Entregó este documento sellado a Felipe, que desconocía su contenido, con órdenes de no abrirlo hasta después de su muerte. Mientras tanto, Carlos confió a su hijo ilegítimo a su camarada de armas Luis Quijada y a su esposa doña Magdalena de Ulloa, y el matrimonio supervisó con esmero la educación del joven en España.

Felipe descubrió que tenía un medio hermano cuando abrió el codicilo sellado, y sus sentimientos ante este descubrimiento —una mezcla de alegría y repugnancia— se manifestaron exquisitamente en su respuesta inicial a la carta de Quijada sobre la verdadera identidad de «aquella persona que Vuestra Magestad sabe que está a mi cargo» (como Quijada le comunicó sutilmente a Felipe poco después de la muerte de Carlos). Felipe escribió primero que «en lo de don Juanyto, he holgado saber que es mi hermano» —un franco reconocimiento del parentesco del muchacho, y del nuevo nombre que se elegía para el pequeño Jerónimo—, pero, tras pensarlo mejor, borró esta frase y la sustituyó por la menos comprometida de «en lo de ese muchacho, he holgado mucho de lo que dél me escribís». Felipe ordenó a Quijada que ocultara la identidad del joven «hasta ser yo en esos reynos».[343] Pese a esta aparente indiferencia, en la asamblea del Toisón de Oro celebrada en el mes de julio de 1559, entre los catorce nuevos caballeros nombrados por el rey, uno de ellos permaneció en el anonimato hasta después de que los dos medio hermanos se encontraron y Felipe le dio públicamente a Juan, de doce años, la insignia de

la orden. Según un testigo de vista, en un gesto de afecto sumamente inusual, Felipe se acercó «començándolo él abrazar y a besar». También le concedió el nombre de «don Juan de Austria» y una casa propia, a cuyo frente colocó a Quijada, y dispuso que su joven medio hermano residiera en la corte junto a dos nietos de Carlos V, don Carlos y Alejandro Farnesio, ambos nacidos en 1545 y, por tanto, tan solo dos años mayores que él.[344]

En noviembre de 1559 la aumentada familia real se estableció en Toledo, donde Felipe había ordenado reunirse a las Cortes de Castilla, y la ciudad se convirtió por un breve lapso de tiempo en la capital de la Monarquía española. Seis meses más tarde, encabezados por la princesa Juana y don Juan, los nobles y representantes de las ciudades de Castilla juraron lealtad a don Carlos en la catedral como «príncipe y sucesor de los reinos de su padre, y, tras su muerte, como su rey y señor natural». La ceremonia duró nueve horas y fue seguida de banquetes y justas (en una de las cuales Felipe lideró una «banda» o cuadrilla) y los premios fueron concedidos por otra joven adolescente recientemente incorporada a la familia real: la tercera esposa de Felipe, Isabel de Valois.

Toledo no fue del agrado de la joven reina, pues nada más llegar a la capital imperial contrajo la viruela. En una carta a su madre, afirmaba: «Puedo aseguraros, Señora, que si no fuera por la buena compañía de mi esposo, que tengo en esta ciudad, jusgaría a este lugar por uno de los más desagradables del mundo». Isabel no era la única. Muchos cortesanos encontraron su alojamiento poco cómodo porque el Tajo rodeaba la ciudad por tres lados, y la subida hasta el castillo real a través de las empinadas y serpenteantes calles —muchas de ellas demasiado estrechas para que pudiera pasar un caballo— les dejaba exhaustos. Al poco tiempo, «por estar las calles tan sucias, ovo tantos y tan malditos lodos quales nunca en Toledo

se vieron; tanto que los cortesanos, así por esto como por la grande apretura y carestía de los alimentos, […] deseaban irse». [345]

Pero ¿adónde? Unos cuantos cortesanos esperaban volver a Bruselas, pero se trataba de meros pensamientos ilusorios. Como el rey dejó claro a Granvela: «Tengo en mucho estos estados [de Flandes] y los quiero mucho, y agora más que nunca», pero no podía abandonar España. «Yo os prometo que he hallado lo de acá peor que lo de allá y imposibilitado por agora, no solo para lo de allá, mas aun para lo de acá, y para cosas tan pequeñas que os espantaríades si lo viésedes, y que os confieso que nunca allá pensé que pudiera ser desta manera». Sin embargo, si no pensaba regresar en Bruselas, ¿dónde podía Felipe establecer su capital? Felipe no reveló su decisión hasta mayo de 1561, cuando firmó una carta en la que avisaba al ayuntamiento de Madrid de que, «haviendo determinado de yr con nuestra corte a esa villa», iba a mandar funcionarios para «que vayan a hazer en ella el apposento de nuestra casa y corte». [346]

Si se hace una mirada retrospectiva, la decisión era inevitable. En 1536, Carlos V había empezado a realizar ampliaciones en el Alcázar medieval situado sobre un risco a las afueras de la ciudad, y Felipe lo había convertido en su cuartel general durante su segunda regencia (1551-1554). Mientras todavía se encontraba en Bruselas, había comprado las huertas y heredades que formaban el Campo del Moro y las había transformado en praderas, así como otros terrenos al otro lado del Alcázar, hacia la actual plaza de Oriente. También empezó a adquirir los terrenos situados al otro lado del Manzanares, que luego se convertirían en la Casa de Campo. Por último, en febrero de 1559, ordenó al maestro de obras del Alcázar que construyera «un muy buen aposento con ventanas de vidrieras que miren al campo» y que pensase «qué manera de apposento

podría hazer allí que fuesse espacioso» [véase lámina 27]. Los 235.000 ducados gastados en las obras del Alcázar entre 1536 y 1562 produjeron (en palabras de Véronique Gérard), «el palacio real más completo de España. Sus dimensiones, la claridad de la distribución, la presencia de una capilla y de una sala de fiestas hacen posible la vida cortesana».[347] Incluso cuando el rey abandonaba su nueva capital durante largos periodos —en 1563-1564, cuando visitó su herencia aragonesa; en 1570, cuando realizó un viaje por Andalucía; e incluso en 1580-1583, cuando se fue a Portugal—, la burocracia, el cuerpo diplomático y la familia real permanecieron en Madrid.

El mundo mediterráneo entre paz y guerra

El rey heredó de su padre la guerra con Solimán el Magnífico *(véase capítulo 1)*, y la presión sobre sus recursos alcanzó tales proporciones que a principios de 1558 autorizó a sus representantes para firmar una larga tregua con el sultán. Poco después, el nuevo sacro emperador romano, Fernando, también mandó enviados para pactar una tregua con los turcos, y Felipe trató de utilizar la iniciativa de su tío como tapadera para ocultar sus propias negociaciones. El sultán se negó, declarando que solo trataría con Fernando: si Felipe quería un armisticio, tendría que suplicarlo públicamente. En marzo de 1559, temeroso de que la guerra con Francia pudiera alargarse, Felipe se tragó su orgullo y aprobó un borrador de condiciones para una «tregua o suspensión de armas» con el sultán durante diez o doce años; pero luego los favorables términos de Cateau-Cambrésis le llevaron a cambiar de opinión. «Habiendo sucedido la paz entre mí y el serenísimo rey de Francia», y en vista de la avanzada edad del «Turco y desasosiego en que se halla por la discordia de sus hijos, me ha parecido que por agora no me conviene tratar ni tener tregua con él». En lugar de ello, razonaba Felipe, «aviendo succedido este assiento de la paz

con el rey de Francia, por donde se puede juzgar que el Turco, sin su favor y no teniendo puertos donde se acoja su armada, no la embiará contra la Cristiandad».[348] El rey veía de este modo una oportunidad de capturar territorios otomanos sin miedo a una represalia inmediata y, un mes más tarde, ordenó a todos sus ministros en el Mediterráneo que enviaran fuerzas a Sicilia en previsión de un ataque sorpresa. En junio de 1559, desde Bruselas, ordenó al duque de Medinaceli, virrey de Sicilia, que comandara estas fuerzas para reconquistar Trípoli.

Esta decisión arrastró a los dominios de Felipe a una guerra que duraría más de dieciocho años y comprometería los recursos necesarios para responder de forma eficaz a otras amenazas en otros lugares. ¿Cómo pudo el rey cometer tan catastrófico error de cálculo? ¿Quizá sus dos campañas victoriosas le habían llevado a albergar falsas ilusiones de invencibilidad en el servicio a Dios? ¿O tal vez lo consideraba su destino? De niño había aprendido de memoria leyendas medievales de combates caballerescos entre moros y cristianos, y un emblema preparado para él en 1548, en la víspera de su partida hacia el Gran Viaje, mostraba un sol con el nombre de «Felipe» y el lema *Donec auferatur Luna* («Hasta que desaparezca la luna»), el cual, según explicaba el autor, significaba que «este sol Philipo que es Vuestra Alteza» debía luchar «hasta que quite las lunas de los turcos y alárabes y otras naciones que traen por blasones la luna». Al año siguiente, el rey recibió un ejemplar de cortesía de un libro, cuya cubierta lucía los nombres de Felipe y Cristo en letras de oro, invitándole a traer la paz a la cristiandad, erradicar la herejía y arrancar Constantinopla y Jerusalén de las manos de los turcos.[349]

Bruselas, sin embargo, no era el lugar más idóneo para orquestar la reconquista de Trípoli (y no digamos la de Constantinopla o Jerusalén). Para cuando sus órdenes llegaron

a Italia, ya había pasado más de un mes, y las noticias tanto de Cateau-Cambrésis como de la concentración de barcos en Sicilia habían llegado a la guarnición otomana de Trípoli, que enseguida se apresuró a reparar las fortificaciones de la ciudad. Esta noticia hizo que Medinaceli perdiera la confianza, de modo que su fuerza expedicionaria no partió hasta diciembre. Como era de prever, las tormentas invernales pronto le hicieron regresar.

Los expertos militares se dieron cuenta enseguida de las consecuencias que supondrían estos retrasos: un ataque carente del factor sorpresa tenía menos probabilidades de triunfar y atraería de inmediato un contraataque otomano. Pero Felipe se mantuvo firme, y la fuerza expedicionaria salió una vez más en febrero de 1561, atracando cerca de Trípoli. Casi inmediatamente, Medinaceli decidió replegarse por precaución a la isla de Djerba (conocida por los españoles como Los Gelves), a medio camino entre Túnez y Trípoli, que sus hombres se aprestaron a fortificar. Allí, tal y como los expertos militares se habían temido, la flota otomana les rodeó. La batalla campal que se desencadenó a continuación se saldó con numerosas bajas para los españoles; los supervivientes se refugiaron tras sus fortificaciones y suplicaron a Felipe que les salvara.

El rey descubrió entonces que Toledo no era mejor sitio que Bruselas para orquestar una campaña en el Mediterráneo oriental. Con sus fuerzas aisladas en Los Gelves, el rey sucumbió a la desesperación. Según el secretario de Estado, Gonzalo Pérez, que veía a Felipe todos los días, «a Su Magestad le ha tocado bien en lo bivo, y assí ha mandado hazer luego provisiones tales y tan gallardas». De hecho, continuaba Pérez, «está tan puesto en que se procure el socorro del duque de Medina[celi] y de los que quedaron en el fuerte de Los Gelves, que si fuesse menester porná en ello el resto y su real persona».

[350] Pero los defensores de Los Gelves, desfallecidos por el hambre, se rindieron. El sultán hizo desfilar a miles de los derrotados soldados de Felipe a través de las calles de Constantinopla antes de hacerles esclavos. Era un revés catastrófico. Según el embajador francés, «nadie creería cuán ha afectado la pérdida de esta plaza a la corte, España y todas sus dependencias, y cuán avergonzados están […] de haber abandonado tan miserablemente a tantos hombres buenos sin hacer nada para paliarlo». «Su Majestad», añadía, «parece estar digiriendo tan amargo trago muy lentamente».[351]

El trago era ciertamente amargo: los veteranos de Los Gelves eran una fuerza de élite, expertos en el combate naval: sin ellos, Felipe no podía garantizar la seguridad de sus posesiones mediterráneas. Para sustituirlos, optó a regañadientes por mandar llamar a los tres mil veteranos españoles que había dejado en los Países Bajos.

Al principio pareció que Felipe había reaccionado de forma exagerada, porque durante los dos años siguientes la flota otomana se mantuvo fuera del Mediterráneo occidental. Esto permitió a Felipe intervenir en Francia en 1562 para apoyar el gobierno regente de su suegra, Catalina de Médicis, frente a una rebelión protestante. Como de costumbre, el rey justificó esta precipitada iniciativa militar en términos mesiánicos:

> Aunque ha venido mal a propósito lo que allí se gastará […] cierto me parece que ni al servicio de Dios, que [e]s lo principal, ni al myo, ni al bien de mis estados, combiene dexar de ayudar a los cathólicos. Bien veo que se aventura algo en ello, mas cierto se aventura mucho más en dejar que prevalezcan los hereges; que si lo hazen, estamos ciertos que todo su negocio ha de ser contra my y contra mys Estados, para que sean como ellos.

Y, desafiante, concluyó: «Lo que no tengo de consentir ni disimular jamás, aunque me costase cien mil vidas, si tantas tuviese».[352]

En 1563, sin embargo, las fuerzas otomanas sitiaron el presidio español de Orán, obligando a Felipe a concentrar su

atención y sus recursos en el Mediterráneo. Según un ministro flamenco que se encontraba en la corte: «Aquí nadie habla de nada que no sea el asedio de Orán», añadiendo que la preparación de una expedición de socorro «ha costado ya más de 600.000 ducados».[353] Aunque al fin las fuerzas de Felipe consiguieron liberar Orán, y al año siguiente capturaron y fortificaron un puesto cercano a Argel, la coordinación de estas operaciones obligó al rey a permanecer en España: como advirtió Pérez a Granvela, todavía en Bruselas, «acá tenemos bien en qué entender. Que como este [Castilla] es el principal miembro de donde se han de curar y reparar y socorrer los otros, no sé cómo Su Magestad lo podría desamparar».[354]

Los turcos también impidieron que Felipe desplegara sus recursos en otras cosas. Como uno de sus ministros de confianza comentó: «He visto las relaciones de lo de la hazienda, y cierto me ha hecho piedad ver de la manera que está; pero si Dios fuese servido de librar a Vuestra Magestad de la guerra, se podría reparar mucho».[355] No sería así: en 1565 llegaron noticias a Madrid de que el sultán había preparado casi doscientos barcos —la mayor flota de la que se tenía constancia desde la Antigüedad— y, en mayo de ese año, veinte mil soldados otomanos desembarcaron en la isla de Malta y se prepararon para un largo asedio. Durante los seis meses siguientes, el socorro de Malta se convirtió en la principal prioridad de Felipe, obligándole a desatender todos los demás problemas que le acuciaban en otros lugares, sobre todo en los Países Bajos.

8. «No terné en nada perder cien mill vidas si tantas tubiesse»: la lucha por la fe, 1562-1567

¿El Mediterráneo o Flandes?

El desastre de Los Gelves, en el verano de 1560, tuvo importantes consecuencias en toda la Monarquía española, incluida la retirada de los tercios españoles de los Países Bajos a fin de apuntalar la defensa del Mediterráneo. «Plazerá a Dios», escribió Felipe, «que agora conocerán todos aí [en Flandes] con el amor y sinceridad que yo trato sus cosas: que por complazerles, hago lo que temo que ha de ser tanto daño myo». Algunos ministros minimizaron la trascendencia de esta decisión —«tan necessaria, o por mejor decir forçosa»—, como escribió Gonzalo Pérez, secretario de Estado del rey, quien rogaba que Dios «sostenga las cosas de manera que no nos pese algún día della, pero como dicen: "Saquenme deste barranco y después echadme en essotro"», pero otros predijeron que el «otro barranco» sería mucho peor. «Verdaderamente», lamentaba Granvela, los tercios «sustenían la reputación con los vezinos, y quiça eran freno a los naturales; que plega Dios, ydos ellos, no nazca algo».[356]

Granvela estaba en lo cierto. Con la salida de las tropas españolas hacia el Mediterráneo en enero de 1561 no solo se perdía un escudo contra una posible agresión francesa, y una «fuerza de reacción rápida» en caso de crisis en Inglaterra o Escocia, sino también un instrumento vital para el control de los Países Bajos, razón por la que estas tropas eran lógicamente impopulares entre los súbditos flamencos del rey. Todo el mundo sabía que un solo tercio español bastaba para mantener el control español sobre Milán, Nápoles y Sicilia; y el conde de Egmont hablaba por boca de muchos cuando se quejaba a

Guillermo de Orange, justo antes de que Felipe abandonara los Países Bajos: «Creo que tantas innovaciones dejan a la gente descontenta». En concreto, «el rey está totalmente decidido a mantener la infantería española y desmovilizar al resto de las tropas: dejo a vuestro criterio adivinar cuáles son sus razones». En una reunión con el rey celebrada durante el capítulo del Toisón de Oro en julio de 1559 *(véase capítulo 3)*, ambos nobles amenazaron con dimitir de sus cargos si Felipe no retiraba a los tercios españoles. Solo la amenaza lanzada a su vez por el rey de retenerles una recompensa en metálico que les tenía prometida les hizo entrar en vereda.[357]

Orange, Egmont y sus colegas disponían de un influyente foro en el que expresar su oposición a cualquiera de las «innovaciones» de Felipe que dejaban «a la gente descontenta». Cada una de las diecisiete provincias que habían reconocido a Felipe como soberano en 1549, tenía Estados *(Staten, États)* compuestos a su vez por representantes del clero, la nobleza y los ayuntamientos, que se reunían con regularidad para tratar asuntos de interés común, en especial aquellos relativos a la legislación y tributación. Periódicamente, Carlos V les había pedido a cada uno de ellos que enviaran delegados a unos Estados Generales para negociar medidas comunes, y Felipe volvió a hacer lo mismo nada más entrar en guerra contra Francia en 1557, convocando a los Estados Generales para la votación de nuevos impuestos. Tras varios meses de amargas negociaciones, los representantes aprobaron la insólita suma de 3,6 millones de ducados, pagaderos en nueve años, pero insistieron en que los impuestos debían ser recaudados y desembolsados por sus propios agentes. Felipe, obstinado, se resistió a ello, pues preveía, con toda razón, que de este modo los Estados obtendrían el poder de retener fondos si él no atendía a sus quejas; pero la presión militar francesa le obligó a ceder. En enero de 1559, los Estados Generales crearon una

junta permanente en cada provincia para supervisar todos los aspectos de la llamada Ayuda Novenal. Aunque Felipe disolvió poco después los Estados Generales, los Estados de cada provincia continuaron reuniéndose y —como Felipe temía— varios de ellos amenazaron con retener lo recaudado a menos que retirara a los tercios españoles.

El desastre de Los Gelves resolvió esta cuestión, pero, pocas semanas después de la retirada de los tropas españolas, salió a la luz otra «innovación»: la creación de trece nuevos obispados y el nombramiento de un arzobispo de Malinas (Mechelen), que actuaría como primado en los Países Bajos. Además, dos canónigos ejercerían como inquisidores en los cabildos, y todos los prebendados de la nueva jerarquía debían ser licenciados universitarios. La estructura de los nuevos obispados suponía muchas ventajas. Hasta entonces, solo cuatro obispos prestaban servicio a los tres millones de habitantes de los Países Bajos españoles, de manera que, desde el punto de vista católico, la adición de más sedes y la creación de una sola jerarquía tenía sentido; pero la fórmula propuesta para su financiación resultó desastrosa. El medio más obvio para sufragar los gastos de los nuevos obispados habría sido un impuesto especial aplicable a todos los ingresos del clero, pero la mayoría de los nuevos obispos serían nombrados también abades de ricos conventos locales y, por tanto, percibirían sus rentas. Esta medida no solo carecía de sentido desde el punto de vista eclesiástico (el mismo prelado no podía desempeñar eficazmente ambas tareas), sino que iba a desencadenar una tormenta política debido a que varios de los abades tenían su sede en los Estados provinciales.

Los planes exactos de la reorganización eclesiástica fueron fruto de un largo proceso de planificación llevado a cabo por Felipe y sus asesores, pero requerían la aprobación papal. Para obtenerla, Felipe redactó una de sus características cartas al papa en las que combinaba los ruegos con los halagos y las

amenazas:

> Yo, como muy obediente hijo, no puedo dexar de acordar e instar y con muy gran vehemencia suplicar, que […] [Vuestra Santidad] tenga por bien de resolverse y proceder en lo que para estos mis estados de Flandes le tengo tantos días ha […] suplicado, y esto con toda brevedad […]. Y sería para mí grandíssima pena y desconsuelo no dexar assentado en estos estados antes de mi partida [para España] lo de la religión, de manera que no se pueda en mi ausencia seguir inconveniente, lo que no sería sin gran cargo de la consciencia de Vuestra Santidad por aver podido remediar tan fácilmente y con medios tan honestos y tan convenientes.[358]

El chantaje funcionó: nada más recibir el mensaje, Paulo IV abandonó sus planes de enviar un legado y en su lugar publicó la bula *Super Universas*, en la que autorizaba la creación de los nuevos obispados en los términos propuestos por Felipe. Pero los documentos llegaron cuando el rey ya se estaba preparando para embarcar hacia España, lo que le obligó a delegar la tarea de ejecutar el plan a su regente, Margarita de Parma. Peor aún, nada más partir el rey, Paulo IV murió, lo que generó inevitablemente nuevos retrasos, mientras el nuevo papa, Pío IV, revisaba el plan en su totalidad.

Temiendo que «se pueda en mi ausencia seguir inconveniente» de la introducción de un cambio tan importante, Felipe decidió mantener el proyecto en secreto hasta poder rematar todos los detalles. El plan no se haría público hasta marzo de 1561, cuando Pío IV emitió una bula anunciando los nombres, obligaciones y retribución económica de los nuevos prelados, empezando por el arzobispo de Malinas, Antonio Perrenot de Granvela, a quien el papa también nombró cardenal. A partir de entonces, Granvela adquirió preeminencia sobre Orange, Egmont y todos los demás nobles y ministros de los Países Bajos.

Estos cambios ofendían a toda la élite política flamenca. Lógicamente, aquellos abades obligados a renunciar a sus puestos (y a sus ingresos) en favor de los nuevos obispos se

opusieron con virulencia y movilizaron a sus colegas de los Estados de cada provincia contra el proyecto. Con similar vehemencia, los regidores de ciudades importantes como Amberes (convertida ahora en sede de una diócesis) protestaron contra la introducción de los inquisidores, alegando que a partir de entonces muchos comerciantes de países protestantes se mantendrían alejados ante el temor de ser arrestados por herejes. Los nobles a su vez se sintieron molestos por la insistencia del rey en nombrar solo a licenciados para los fructíferos puestos eclesiásticos antes ocupados por su propia descendencia. Por último, todos se sintieron insultados por el prolongado secretismo de Felipe, dado que era obvio que un plan tan complejo debía de llevar muchos años preparándose, y en todo ese tiempo no se había realizado ni la más mínima consulta. Los que se oponían al plan, frustrados, dirigieron entonces su ira contra el nuevo jefe de la jerarquía eclesiástica, Granvela.

El cardenal ya se había granjeado numerosos enemigos, entre los cuales sobresalían Ruy Gómez y Francisco de Eraso, cuya influencia en el gobierno central de la monarquía había sobrevivido a su traslado desde los Países Bajos a España. Estos encontraron un valioso aliado en Felipe de Montmorency, conde de Hornes y capitán de la guarda flamenca de Felipe. Según las indignadas palabras del conde,

> Su Magestad me hizo dezir por el señor Ruy Gómez [en 1559] que quería le fuese a servir en España cabe su persona, y que estando allá me haría superintendente de los negocios destos estados [Flandes] […] [Pero] llegado yo a la corte de Su Magestad estuve en ella más de seys meses antes que se me comunicasse algún negocio destos estados de que yo avía de ser superintendente.

Hornes culpó a Granvela de su marginación, y en 1561 pidió y recibió el permiso del rey para volver a los Países Bajos. Su regreso coincidió con la agitación causada por los nuevos obispados, por lo que informó puntualmente a Eraso: «Dado que este es un asunto que no me afecta, no deseo hablar más de

él. Solo quiero decirle que el cardenal está a cargo de todo y, si las cosas van mal, su majestad debería culparle exclusivamente a él».[359] El secretario mostró de inmediato la carta al rey, con la esperanza de desacreditar a Granvela, pero Felipe no hizo nada por el momento. Luego, Hornes persuadió a Orange y Egmont de que se unieran a él firmando una carta para el rey en la que amenazaban con que, a menos que el cardenal abandonara los Países Bajos, ellos dimitirían de todos sus cargos. El conde organizó también una «liga» constituida por todos los enemigos del cardenal, los cuales acordaron vestirse con la misma librea, llevando en la manga una distintiva divisa con un capirote (que pretendía parodiar el birrete del cardenal), y se negaron a asistir al Consejo de Estado en Bruselas siempre que Granvela estuviera presente. Esto comprometía gravemente la autoridad de Margarita, y, en 1563, esta envió a su secretario, Tomás de Armenteros, al rey para informarle de que, a menos que Felipe regresara a los Países Bajos de inmediato, Granvela tendría que marcharse.

Hornes y sus colegas habían golpeado en un momento de extrema vulnerabilidad del rey. Por un lado, Armenteros llegó a la corte al mismo tiempo que la noticia del asedio de Orán por los turcos, obligando a Felipe a elegir entre el Mediterráneo y los Países Bajos. Por otro lado, la enemistad entre Ruy Gómez y el duque de Alba había generado una grave inestabilidad en todo el gobierno *(véase capítulo 4)*. Un perspicaz observador francés escribió que «el éxito y la perseverancia de los nobles [flamencos] en su disputa se basa en el partidismo y las divisiones que existen en la corte de España», porque los dos grandes protagonistas «extienden sus alas sobre los dominios más lejanos, como Flandes, donde el duque apoya al cardenal Granvela, mientras que Ruy Gómez, que desde los tiempos del difunto emperador [Carlos V] ha sido su enemigo, favorece por el contrario a los nobles».[360] Cuando Armenteros llegó a la

corte a finales de 1563, Ruy Gómez y sus aliados apoyaban el ultimátum de Margarita: si el rey quería mantener su autoridad en los Países Bajos, sostenían, debía regresar a Bruselas o bien destituir a Granvela. Preocupado por la defensa del Mediterráneo, en marzo de 1564 Felipe ordenó de mala gana al cardenal que saliera de Bruselas. «Agora veremos», comentó el rey con cautela, «cómo se encaminan las cosas».[361]

Rebelión en los Países Bajos

La caída de un ministerio, tanto en el siglo XVI como en la actualidad, no solo significaba la retirada del asesor principal, sino también el eclipse de sus políticas y de sus partidarios. En Bruselas, los nobles disidentes retornaron al Consejo de Estado y convencieron a Margarita de que debía detener la implantación del proyecto de los nuevos obispados, mientras que los representantes de los Estados provinciales le advirtieron de que, a menos que suspendiera las leyes contra la herejía, podría producirse un «levantamiento popular» debido a los rumores de que «todo el mundo sería obligado a asistir a misa, vísperas y completas todos los días, si no quería contrariar al rey o incurrir en otras penas».[362] La situación religiosa no tardó en cambiar. El avance del protestantismo en Francia, Inglaterra y Alemania había proporcionado lugares de asilo a los que los disidentes flamencos podían acudir para escapar de la persecución; en cuanto esta terminó, con la salida de Granvela, muchos exiliados volvieron. Los grupos protestantes comenzaron a celebrar servicios al aire libre con total impunidad en ciudades cercanas a las fronteras.

Las circunstancias económicas aumentaron la tensión dentro de los Países Bajos. El duro invierno de 1564-1565 causó una gran miseria y arruinó la siguiente cosecha, mientras que el estallido de la guerra entre Dinamarca y Suecia dejó sin trabajo a muchas familias de los Países Bajos que dependían del

comercio del Báltico, e interrumpió también la importación de grano polaco. Tanto el desempleo como el precio de pan aumentaron. Cualquier habitante de los Países Bajos podía darse cuenta de los graves riesgos que representaba esta crisis económica. Con el alto nivel de desempleo y «cada vez mayor escasez de grano», observaba uno de ellos, «no sé si será posible contener al pueblo, que está descontento y protesta ruidosamente»; y, continuaba con perspicacia, «si la gente se subleva, me temo que la cuestión religiosa también se verá implicada».[363]

Los nobles del Consejo de Estado afirmaron entonces que la mejor manera de poner fin a la herejía era derogar la obligatoria pena de muerte que se imponía a los herejes, para que los jueces renuentes a ejecutar por motivos religiosos estuvieran más dispuestos a actuar. Decidieron enviar a Egmont a convencer al rey de que autorizara este cambio y conseguir también dos objetivos políticos: más poder para el Consejo de Estado y el nombramiento de algunos aliados suyos como miembros. Justo antes de que el conde saliera de Bruselas, llegaron noticias de Estambul de que «los turcos estaban preparando 120 galeras y 10 barcos» para una campaña en el Mediterráneo. Confiado en que esto obligaría al rey a ceder de nuevo, en febrero de 1565 Egmont llegó a la corte, donde se alojó con Ruy Gómez. Permaneció allí seis semanas.[364]

Los dos negocios más importantes de Felipe en ese momento consistían en preparar la defensa del Mediterráneo en caso de ataque de los turcos y organizar una reunión en Bayona entre su esposa, Isabel de Valois, y su madre, Catalina de Médicis, en la que los principales ministros tratarían de conciliar las diferencias entre Francia y España. Mantener el *statu quo* en los Países Bajos era esencial para el éxito de ambas empresas, de modo que, cuando Egmont llegó a la corte, el rey trató de aplazar la discusión de sus peticiones cuanto fuese

posible. Primero, halagó a su visitante consultándole de modo grandilocuente sobre asuntos militares (Egmont había luchado con Carlos V en África y Alemania antes de su gran victoria sobre los franceses en Gravelinas); el conde, por su parte, describió a los cortesanos la inestable situación en los Países Bajos, e hizo alarde de sus hazañas militares en presencia del príncipe don Carlos, entonces con veinte años de edad, que se mostró muy interesado en los asuntos del norte de Europa.

Transcurrido un mes, Egmont empezó a impacientarse. A finales de marzo, fue más allá de las instrucciones que le había dado Margarita, asegurándole al rey que solo conseguiría aplacar el malestar en los Países Bajos si nombraba a cuatro de sus amigos nobles para el Consejo de Estado de Bruselas y ordenaba «que toda la massa de los negocios respondiese allí». Ante estas nuevas demandas, Felipe se debatía entre la frustración y la ira. «A mý me traen de manera lo que carga de mý que no sé lo que me digo ni lo que me hago», se quejó a Gonzalo Pérez. Al mismo tiempo, intentaba averiguar los verdaderos motivos de las peticiones del conde: «Aunque creo cierto que él [Egmont] las dice con buena intención, podría ser que algunas que no la tubiesen tal le pusieren en ello, quizá con no buen fin».[365]

Con noticias de que la flota turca había zarpado de Estambul, el rey se puso a formular una respuesta a Egmont que mantuviera la tranquilidad en los Países Bajos durante la campaña mediterránea. En Madrid, el Consejo de Estado debatió sobre las demandas del conde el 24 de marzo de 1565 (¡un mes entero después de haberlas presentado!) y aconsejó al rey que las rechazara todas. Felipe pensó que eso sería demasiado peligroso y optó por el engaño: aparentaría cumplir los deseos del conde, pero evitando realizar cualquier concesión en particular. Concretamente, se mostraría de acuerdo en crear una junta de teólogos en los Países Bajos para considerar si el

castigo de la herejía podía modificarse sin favorecer su propagación. Cuando Pérez, que era clérigo además de ser el ministro encargado de preparar las instrucciones para Egmont, cuestionó la conveniencia de esta medida, Felipe le tranquilizó diciendo: «No quiero yo que en ninguna manera se dexen de castigar [los herejes], sino que en la forma se myre». Para añadir más énfasis, el rey le aseguró a Pérez: «Perdiéndose la religión, yo perdería mys estados». Respecto a las demás demandas de Egmont, en cambio, el rey se decantó por la ambigüedad, diciéndole a Pérez: «Ya tendréis entendida my intinción, que es de no resolver agora estas cosas que el conde pretende, ni desengañarle dellas, porque nos mataría y nunca acabaríamos con él, y ¡yo muero por despacharle, porque no me dexa hazer cosa de muchas que havría de hazer!». Felipe invirtió mucho tiempo en redactar unas instrucciones para Egmont, hasta que por fin concluyó: «Me parece que está así muy bien. Plega a Dios que el [conde] se contente a ello y se vaya»[366].

Cuando redactaba las instrucciones finales, Pérez incluía palabra por palabra muchos pasajes escritos por el cansado rey, pero también introdujo alguna floritura retórica de su cosecha. «En lo de la religión», añadió al borrador del rey, recordando una carta que había redactado tres años antes, «a mí más me preme y menos tengo que consentir que aya mudança en ella, y en que no terné en nada perder cien mill vidas si tantas tubiesse antes que consentirla». Las instrucciones concluían lamentando la imposibilidad del rey de salir de España «por visitar aquellos estados y holgarme en ellos» o enviar «más cumplida prouisión de dinero para todo». Así pues, «con auerse recrescido esta venida del Turco, que como tenéis entendido viene tan poderosa contra mis reynos», la defensa del Mediterráneo debía tener prioridad.[367]

Felipe y Pérez pensaron que Egmont se mostraría más crédulo si recibía las instrucciones en una audiencia personal,

de modo que el rey le llamó a su presencia el 4 de abril de 1565. Empezó por confirmar el título de Egmont sobre dos disputados señoríos de Brabante y autorizarle para que aceptara unos honorarios ofrecidos por la provincia de Flandes, valorados en unos 50.000 ducados. Una vez hubo ablandado así a su vasallo, el rey pronunció un discurso preparado con cuidado en el que subrayaba la necesidad de mantener el ejercicio exclusivo de la religión católica en sus dominios, aunque exagerando la importancia de la junta de teólogos y prometiendo una solución rápida a todos los demás problemas tan pronto como hubiera consultado con Margarita. La única exigencia específica de Felipe era que cesara el uso de las libreas contrarias a Granvela; «Conde, no se haga más», interrumpió a Egmont cuando este trató de explicarse. Dos días después, el conde partió hacia Bruselas sintiéndose «el hombre más feliz del mundo» al ver sus objetivos políticos y personales cumplidos. [368]

En cambio, la representación dejó al rey agotado. Odiaba este tipo de enfrentamiento público, y planificar todo aquel engaño tan elaborado le había impedido ocuparse de otros temas, como la entrevista de Bayona. Nada más concluir la audiencia con Egmont, Felipe le dijo a Gonzalo Pérez que «he quedado tan cansado con lo que aý pasé, y con el camino que vino sobrello, y no dormyr», que ya no podía más. Todavía una semana después se sentía «tan ocupado y tan alcanzado de sueño porque he menester lo más de las noches para ver papeles que otros negocios no me dexan de día».[369] Al poco tiempo, el rey abandonó su desigual lucha con el papeleo y se marchó solo a pasar una temporada cazando y pescando en el Bosque de Segovia, confiado en que los Países Bajos le darían por fin el respiro que tanto necesitaba para poder alcanzar el éxito así en el Mediterráneo como en Bayona.

Los ánimos de Egmont seguían todavía altos cuando llegó a

Bruselas. Aseguró (falsamente) a Margarita y al resto de los nobles que, a pesar del claro enunciado de sus instrucciones, el rey había accedido de palabra a relajar las leyes contra la herejía y reforzar los poderes del Consejo de Estado. En todo caso, continuó el conde con tono de suficiencia, «al estar preocupado por la guerra contra los turcos, cuyo ataque sobre Malta se espera de un momento a otro, a su majestad le resulta imposible venir a los Países Bajos este año». Alentado por esta información, el consejo, usurpando «el control soberano de todos los asuntos públicos», instó a la junta de teólogos a debatir sobre las posibles formas de «moderar» las leyes contra la herejía, precisamente lo que Felipe, de manera expresa, había prohibido que hiciera. Pero, al menos, las libreas y las críticas a la política real cesaron.[370]

El propio rey arruinó por completo la armonía el 13 de mayo de 1565, cuando firmó un fardo de cartas aparentemente rutinarias para Margarita. Una de ellas desestimaba la petición de clemencia hacia algunos anabaptistas condenados a muerte: el rey insistía en que debían ser quemados en la hoguera. Felipe no había previsto el impacto de esta breve carta, que echaba por la borda todos los beneficios de la ambigüedad que había mantenido para despachar a Egmont; pero su complicado estilo de gobierno le traicionó. Gonzalo Pérez, que tanto había trabajado junto al rey en la elaboración de las instrucciones de Egmont, no redactó las cartas del 13 de mayo; el rey le había encargado esta tarea a Charles de Tisnacq, el ministro neerlandés que normalmente se encargaba de su correspondencia en francés y flamenco. Tisnacq siempre había sido un despiadado azote de los herejes, lo cual le había granjeado el aprecio del rey, pero no su confianza. Por tanto, Tisnacq no era consciente del deseo del rey de ganar tiempo cuando preparó la respuesta regia tocante a los anabaptistas el 13 de mayo: por el contrario, dado que hasta entonces Felipe

siempre se había «holgado mucho» con la ejecución de herejes, Tisnacq redactó una breve carta rechazando la petición de clemencia para ellos, al igual que lo había hecho en el pasado con otras similares, y la envió a firmar al rey. Como estaba en francés, es posible que el rey ni siquiera la leyera, pero Margarita y los nobles de los Países Bajos sí lo hicieron y sopesaron cada palabra.

Durante un tiempo, todo siguió en calma. En junio de 1565, llegó confirmación a Bruselas de que tropas turcas habían desembarcado en Malta, y el mes siguiente la junta de teólogos emitió un informe en el que recomendaba encarecidamente relajar las leyes principales contra la herejía. Margarita lo envió enseguida a Felipe, pidiéndole no solo su decisión, sino también que aclarara su postura «sobre varias cuestiones que el conde Egmont había escuchado directamente de su boca, [porque] las cartas de su Majestad [del 13 de mayo] parecen, en ciertos puntos, contradecir su informe». Los partidarios del rey en los Países Bajos esperaban ansiosos su respuesta, conscientes de que «ni siquiera la caída de Constantinopla, ni tampoco la liberación de Malta, servirá de alivio a los Países Bajos».[371]

La carta de Margarita, y sus pocos gratos documentos adjuntos, le llegaron a Felipe a finales de agosto. Pérez redactó de inmediato una adusta respuesta en la que incluía un rotundo rechazo a las propuestas de los teólogos; pero, con Malta todavía sitiada, Felipe no la firmó. De hecho no hizo nada durante tres semanas, ya que, como le dijo a Pérez, «ay tanto que mirar en ello y tanto combiene el acertarlo». Así pues, pospuso la resolución de la confusión que había generado en los Países Bajos (utilizando excusas como que «por tener ayer y esta mañana muy ruin la cabeza» no había podido leer documento alguno) hasta saber que sus fuerzas habían liberado Malta.[372] Sin embargo, las decisiones no podían posponerse de manera indefinida y, al final, el rey elaboró una exhaustiva respuesta a

todos los asuntos de los Países Bajos pendientes, aconsejado tanto por Gonzalo Pérez como por el duque de Alba, que acababa de regresar de Bayona, donde había dirigido acertadamente las negociaciones con los franceses.

Para evitar la posibilidad de incurrir en más contradicciones, mandó a Pérez redactar todas las respuestas a las cartas de Margarita, encargándose el propio Felipe de copiar las que estaban en francés antes de pedirle a Tisnacq que las pasara a limpio. Entre el 17 y el 20 de octubre de 1565, mientras se encontraba en el Bosque de Segovia, el rey firmó casi cien cartas en las que aclaraba su postura sobre todos los asuntos: las leyes contra la herejía debían permanecer intactas; los inquisidores debían continuar realizando su trabajo; todos los herejes capturados debían ser ejecutados; el Consejo de Estado de Margarita no recibiría nuevos poderes; ninguno de los nobles propuestos por Egmont entrarían en dicho consejo. Un mes después, un enviado especial de Felipe explicó a Margarita que su amo no podía conceder más porque «sería no solo desauthoridad y deshonor grande suyo, mas perder la opinión del mundo y reputación». La respuesta de Margarita fue profética: era mejor perder «la opinión del mundo y reputación» que sus Estados.[373]

Aunque Felipe debía de saber que sus decisiones serían impopulares, no podía imaginar la espectacular reacción que iban a desencadenar. Nada más recibir la carta del rey del 13 de mayo en la que ordenaba la ejecución de los anabaptistas, algunos nobles flamencos se reunieron en secreto para debatir qué medidas tomar en caso de que Felipe, una vez terminada su campaña en el Mediterráneo, se negara a moderar las leyes contra la herejía. A mediados de noviembre, al recibir las cartas enviadas desde el Bosque de Segovia, el mismo grupo de nobles volvió a encontrarse para redactar una petición, el *Compromiso*, exigiendo la abolición de la Inquisición y de todas las leyes

contra la herejía. En pocas semanas, reunieron unas cuatrocientas firmas de otros tantos nobles, que venían a equivaler a una décima parte de toda la aristocracia de los Países Bajos. A pesar de no figurar la firma de ningún grande de la nobleza, el marqués de Bergen y el príncipe de Orange dimitieron de todos sus cargos, y muchos otros amenazaron con seguir su ejemplo. Así, con la autoridad central en suspenso, el 5 de abril de 1566, cuando unos trescientos confederados entraron a caballo y armados en el palacio de la regente en Bruselas y exigieron que esta anulara inmediatamente todas las leyes contra la herejía, Margarita, abandonada por todos, accedió de mala gana. Emitió un documento, la *Moderación*, por el que instaba a todos los inquisidores y magistrados a que dejaran de aplicar las leyes contra la herejía hasta nuevo aviso. También encargó a dos nobles simpatizantes de los confederados —el marqués de Bergen y el barón de Montigny (hermano de Hornes)— que fueran a España y le pidieran a Felipe la aprobación de sus concesiones.

Al no temer ya la persecución, muchos exiliados protestantes regresaron desde Francia, Inglaterra, Alemania y Suiza, dispuestos a extender su fe por todos los Países Bajos. Prácticamente todos los magistrados obedecieron las órdenes de Margarita y les dejaron en paz. Así, al poco tiempo, los servicios calvinistas celebrados al aire libre atraían a miles de personas todos los domingos y festivos. Las cálidas temperaturas nocturnas y el gran número de parados (víctimas de la continua guerra entre Dinamarca y Suecia) favorecieron la afluencia de público, hasta el punto de que los predicadores protestantes celebraban estos servicios en casi todos los Países Bajos. El 19 de julio de 1566, Margarita advirtió a su hermano de que la rebelión estaba a punto de estallar, afirmando que a Felipe no le quedaban más que dos alternativas: «Tomar las armas» contra

los calvinistas y volver a Flandes en persona «o autorizar las concesiones» contenidas en la *Moderación*.[374]

Mientras el correo encargado de entregar el ultimátum de Margarita iba de camino, el Consejo de Estado español debatía qué política era la adecuada para los Países Bajos. El 26 de julio, Felipe informó a Montigny, recién llegado a la corte, que «no estava bien con el concepto de aquella *Moderaçión* que le avían ymbiado y que no querría que passase adelante; que él avía determinado de yr allá en persona a la primavera para dar orden a todo». A esto, «Montigny replicó muy libremente —y hasta que puso color a Su Majestad— diziendo que essa resolución no era acertada a su servicio, que sabía muy bien que era la perdición de aquella tierra». El barón, airado, le recordó al rey que para «la primavera» faltaban ocho meses, y que, durante ese periodo, «aquella tierra padecerá mucho» y «a Su Majestad se ofrecerán otros negocios de importancia; que la dilación y alargas eran las que avían causado todo el mal y causarían mucho más».[375]

Montigny pagaría con su vida el haber puesto «color a Su Majestad», pero la llegada de la alarmante carta de Margarita aplazó su castigo. El 31 de julio, solo cinco días después de haber declarado que no habría cambios, Felipe otorgó todas las concesiones recomendadas por su medio hermana. Tras protestar que «en realidad no alcanzo a entender cómo puede haberse desencadenado tanto mal en tan poco tiempo», abolió la Inquisición en los Países Bajos, suspendió todas las leyes contra la herejía y perdonó a los líderes de la oposición. Luego, al igual que había hecho doce años atrás, cuando se vio obligado a aceptar el tratado matrimonial con María Tudor negociado por su padre *(véase capítulo 3)*, Felipe hizo constar ante notario que sus concesiones, obtenidas bajo coacción, no eran vinculantes. A continuación tranquilizó al papa —como antes lo había hecho con Pérez— diciéndole que «antes que

sufrir la menor quiebra del mundo en lo de la religión, y del servicio de Dios, perderé todos mis estados y cien vidas que tuviesse»; y autorizó a Margarita a que reclutara trece mil soldados en Alemania, enviando cartas de crédito por valor de 300.000 ducados para pagarles.[376] Antes de que la noticia de esta nueva política pudiera llegar a los Países Bajos, la situación allí cambió drásticamente: había comenzado lo que los cronistas flamencos denominarían *Het wonderjaar*, «el año milagroso».

El año milagroso

El 10 de agosto de 1566, día de San Lorenzo, un pequeño grupo de protestantes entró en un monasterio flamenco y destrozó todas sus imágenes. Nueve días después, el conde de Egmont informó a Felipe de que «en este momento, el culto católico ha cesado en toda la provincia de Flandes» y «todo el comercio se ha interrumpido, de manera que de los 100.000 hombres que antes solían ganarse el pan en los Países Bajos, ahora tienen que mendigarlo». «Muchas cosas dependen de esto», añadía inquieto, «porque la pobreza obliga a la gente a hacer cosas que de otro modo nunca habrían pensado hacer». Margarita escribió una desesperada carta a su hermano en la que afirmaba que «casi la mitad de la población de aquí practica o simpatiza con la herejía» y que el número de personas que se habían levantado en armas, desafiando su autoridad, «sobrepasaba ya las 200.000».[377]

Durante algún tiempo, los iconoclastas se centraron en los conventos aislados de Flandes, pero el 22 de agosto una columna de calvinistas entró en Gante, la capital de la provincia, y destrozó sistemáticamente todas las imágenes, vidrieras y otros elementos visibles del culto católico de todas las iglesias y conventos de la ciudad. Con el mundo derrumbándose a su alrededor, Margarita recibió las concesiones del rey fechadas el 31 de julio y las publicó de

inmediato, pero ya era demasiado tarde para detener la furia iconoclasta. Durante el mes de agosto, los calvinistas destruyeron los símbolos católicos en más de cuatrocientas iglesias y monasterios, y diversas congregaciones protestantes celebraron sus servicios en varios de los templos que de este modo quedaron «purificados».

Felipe recibió las noticias de estos asombrosos acontecimientos en el Bosque de Segovia el 3 de septiembre y, como en otros momentos de crisis, sufrió una fuerte reacción física: tuvo «aquella noche un sentimiento de calentura» y, durante los cuatro días siguientes, lo sangraron «dos vezes […] y por esto no a avido lugar de entender en negocios de ninguna parte, ni ha firmado Su Majestad ninguna cosa». Alonso de Laloo, a quien el conde de Hornes había enviado a la corte para presentar sus quejas al rey, subrayó las graves consecuencias que estos hechos acarrearían a los nobles confederados. Al rey «no faltarían fuerças ni dinero», escribió Laloo, porque la flota anual procedente de América acababa de llegar a Sevilla con casi cinco millones de ducados, la mayor suma registrada hasta entonces, y «se ha embargado todo». Por otra parte, el reino de Nápoles había votado impuestos por valor de dos millones de ducados y las Cortes de Castilla, recién convocadas, votarían seguramente una cantidad aún mayor. «¡Que todo ello es quantidad para no solamente sojuzgar los estados de Flandes que son de Su Majestad, sino para conquistar otra tierra de nuevo!», exclamaba. Los españoles pensaban, continuaba Laloo, «que esse levantamiento, o por mejor dezir rebellión, no va dirigido sino a una libertad desmandada, con la qual no aura reconoscer ni a Dios ni a Rey, ni los que estuvieren puestos por él», y advertía a Hornes de que la actual situación «no puede durar, ni salir tan adelante que los que an sido causa dello no sean castigados». Una semana más tarde, vaticinaba que Felipe, «tarde o temprano, no podrá dexar de vengarse de tan gran

desacato, y que si sale de Spaña será con tan grande poder y fuerça que jamás rey passó allá». La cuestión, entonces, no era si el rey utilizaría la fuerza para restaurar el orden, sino cuándo lo haría.[378]

El 22 de septiembre de 1566, aunque Felipe parecía «un poco flaco, y assí se le parece en el rostro múltiple sangrías y purgas», presidió una reunión de su Consejo de Estado. El grupo tomó dos decisiones claves: «Que la situación en los Países Bajos no podría solucionarse sin la intervención de las tropas» y, dado que «ningún hombre particular bastara» por tanto, «la persona de Su Magestad, o la fuerza de exército en tanto que su persona, vaya».[379] A continuación, el consejo consideró la posición estratégica de España. Por un lado, tras una década de ataques turcos en el Mediterráneo central, el sultán había invadido Hungría. Por otro, pese al riesgo de que tanto Francia como Inglaterra se opusieran al uso de la fuerza en los vecinos Países Bajos, el consejo estimó que ninguno de los dos podría organizar una resistencia efectiva. Por tanto, decidió que Felipe debía trasladar a todos los tercios españoles en Italia a Milán y, desde allí, conducirlos personalmente hasta la todavía leal provincia de Luxemburgo, donde se unirían a otros sesenta mil efectivos reclutados en Alemania. De este modo, el rey, acompañado de su poderoso ejército, acabaría con cualquier disidencia.

Un mes después, el 22 de octubre de 1566, el Consejo de Estado se reunió, una vez más en presencia del rey, para concretar la estrategia que debía seguirse respecto a los Países Bajos. Todos se reafirmaron en su convicción de que tolerar la situación actual «aventuraba la reputación de España», ya que de este modo se daría un «exemplo de flaqueza y ánimo para rebelarse otras provincias», y por eso todos eran partidarios del uso de la fuerza como necesidad indispensable. La discusión se centró entonces en quién debía ponerse al mando. Ruy Gómez

y el conde de Feria sostenían que si el rey iba a los Países Bajos en persona para restaurar el orden, no se requeriría más que un pequeño contingente; pero Alba y los demás objetaban que, dado el alcance de la insurgencia, esto suponía un grave riesgo personal para Felipe. Era mejor, en su opinión, enviar los tercios reunidos en Milán a los Países Bajos bajo el mando de algún general de confianza capaz de aplastar cualquier forma de sedición, después de lo cual el rey podría desplazarse allí por mar, sin ningún peligro.[380]

Pero ¿quién debía encargarse de conducir las tropas desde Lombardía y comandar el ejército de la represión? Alba, el general más experimentado de España, tenía sesenta años y una salud precaria, pues la gota le había mantenido inmovilizado gran parte del otoño. Pero en noviembre aceptó zarpar hacia Italia en la primavera de 1567 y asumir el mando de las tropas reunidas para someter a los Países Bajos. Como escribió casi un siglo después el conde de la Roca, historiador oficial de la Casa de Alba: aun si la decisión de enviar al duque no fue la más acertada, era casi la única posible, «siendo el achaque de Flandes como bola de nieve que discurre por campaña nevada».[381] Entre tanto, algunos nobles neerlandeses trataron de reclutar tropas en Francia y Alemania, pero fracasaron, mientras que Margarita utilizó el dinero enviado de España para reclutar un ejército que, en marzo de 1567, derrotó a las fuerzas rebeldes en la batalla de Oosterweel, cerca de Amberes. Poco después, el culto calvinista cesó en todos los Países Bajos; las ciudades que habían desafiado al rey se apresuraron a pacificarse; y muchos disidentes, incluido el príncipe de Orange, huyeron al extranjero.

Al mes siguiente, en Aranjuez, Alba mantuvo una larga entrevista a solas con su señor. Los dos acordaron que, gracias a la victoria en Oosterweel, la restauración del orden en los Países Bajos ya no requeriría los 72.000 soldados previstos al

principio, sino que bastaría con los veteranos de Alba procedentes de Italia y las tropas ya movilizadas por Margarita. También acordaron que Felipe reuniría una flota en los puertos cantábricos y zarparía con toda su corte hacia Flandes en cuanto el duque le hubiera confirmado que podía desembarcar sin peligro. Fijaron como la fecha prevista para la salida de la flota real el 15 de agosto. En lo tocante al gobierno de España durante la ausencia del rey, Alba sugirió a Felipe que llevase a toda su familia consigo y encargara la regencia al cardenal Diego de Espinosa.[382]

El duque salió hacia Italia el 17 de abril de 1567, pero cuando llegó a Milán vaciló, temiendo que el éxodo de todos los tercios de veteranos dejase Italia expuesta a un ataque de los turcos. No abandonó Lombardía hasta el 18 de junio de 1567. Alba y sus veteranos cruzaron el monte Cenisio y recorrieron un itinerario de mil kilómetros —que sus contemporáneos, algunos con admiración y otros con miedo, denominarían el Camino de los Españoles— hacia Luxemburgo, adonde llegaron el 15 de agosto, el día previsto para que el rey partiera de España con su flota.

El viaje que nunca se hizo

Las cartas que el duque enviaba con regularidad al rey mientras recorría el Camino de los Españoles pronto revelaron que llegaría demasiado tarde respecto al plan original y, el 7 de agosto, Felipe informó a Alba de que había resuelto posponer su marcha hacia Flandes hasta la primavera de 1568, una decisión «de que me ha parecido avisaros luego para que con el mysmo secreto y dissimulación». Le comunicó su decisión de una forma bastante insólita: el soberano del Estado más grande del mundo pasó varias horas solo, con el libro de códigos empleado por sus oficiales en la Secretaría de Estado, cifrando personalmente sus pensamientos sobre cómo restaurar el orden

y la estabilidad en los Países Bajos en su ausencia. «Va esta [carta] con tanto recatamiento», le aseguró a Alba, que «nadie no lo sepa en ninguna manera del mundo» [véase lámina 28] [383].

El rey repasaba las consecuencias principales que su cambio de planes supondría para la restauración del control en los Países Bajos. Su primera preocupación la constituía «el castigo» para todas las personas implicadas en los desórdenes. En principio le había ordenado a Alba que hiciera una redada de todos los sospechosos antes de la llegada de la flota real; pero en ese momento «no sé si pudiera ser con la seguridad y fundamento que convenía, y creo yo que en invierno la puede aver mayor por lo de Alemania, que es adonde puede venir algún estorbo o embaraço a esto del castigo». Por otra parte, un retraso constituiría «causa a que el príncipe de Orange se asegurase y quixese venir a essos estados» y así «se pudiese hazer con él lo que el mereçe». Por el contrario, «si se haze [castigo] con otro antes, será imposibilitar lo que a él toca para siempre». Los hechos demostrarían lo acertado del criterio del rey a este respecto; desgraciadamente para sus planes, acto seguido hacía una concesión a Alba que resultaría crucial:

> Pero yo os remito todo esto, como a quien estará sobre el negocio y tendrá mejor entendidos los inconvenientes o conbenientes que podrá aver en todo y si será menester dar priessa o espacio en este punto del castigo, de que depende tanto.

Después, el rey abordaba el problema que planteaba la dirección del gobierno de los Países Bajos hasta su llegada. Había despachado de España a Alba con plenos poderes como capitán general del ejército, pero con órdenes de que compartiera la autoridad civil con Margarita. En el momento álgido de la furia iconoclasta del año anterior, Margarita había suplicado al rey que le enviara tropas; pero ahora que había restaurado el orden, se oponía firmemente al enfoque de Alba y no dejaba de acuciar tanto a Felipe como al duque con peticiones para que detuviera su marcha. Al ver que sus ruegos

no eran atendidos, Margarita informó abruptamente al rey de que, fuera Felipe o no, había decidido «de yrse al octubre en qualquier caso». Dada la profunda animadversión que Margarita profesaba a Alba, el rey escribió: «Tememos que nunca se lleve con vos». Por lo que creyó que lo mejor era dejarla marchar y que Alba tomase el mando tanto civil como militar hasta su llegada.

Felipe abordó a continuación una tercera consecuencia derivada de su decisión de no partir inmediatamente hacia Flandes: el coste de mantener a las tropas españolas de Alba mientras tanto. Ordenó al duque que evaluara qué parte de estos costes cabría esperar que fueran sufragados por los Países Bajos y cuál debería proceder de España (recordándole al duque que, al haber gastado casi un millón de ducados en preparar su marcha, su Hacienda andaba escasa de fondos). Felipe concluía su incursión en los mensajes cifrados reiterando la necesidad de mantener el secreto: Alba solo debía enviar su respuesta a estas cuestiones al rey «en su mano», y a nadie más. «No me he cansado de escrivir», concluía Felipe (de manera poco convincente), y, en todo caso, «a sido necesario por las materias de que trato en ella».

Alba hizo buen uso del permiso de su amo para hacer caso omiso de los contenidos de la carta: de hecho, ¡rechazó todas las sugerencias del rey! En «lo del castigo», pasadas solo dos semanas desde su llegada a Bruselas, durante las cuales incluso él se sintió «forçado esconder las uñas», Alba creó un órgano secreto, el Consejo de Trublas, para juzgar a los sospechosos de rebelión y herejía. Pocos días más tarde, arrestó a Egmont, Hornes, los secretarios de estos y a todos los «que formaron en el *Compromiso*» a quienes pudo localizar, comentando con suficiencia: «He procurado que sean habidos por condenados en *crimen lesae majestatis*», es decir, por traición, cuya pena era la muerte.[384]

En cuanto la noticia de estas detenciones llegó a la corte real, Felipe hizo arrestar al barón de Montigny e instó a Alba a que acelerase los juicios a los detenidos por presunta traición, «pues sabe que conviene que estén concluidos para la primavera», cuando él tenía pensado zarpar hacia Flandes. También hizo pública en este momento su decisión de aplazar su viaje a Flandes y, en su carta un tanto defensiva al papa, ofreció dos explicaciones: «Por el peligro que avría en passar en el invierno por este mar de Poniente, y principalmente por parescerme necessario que antes de mi llegada se dé orden y allanen algunas cosas que convenía mucho que estén hechas para cuando yo llegue». Se trataba de la misma estrategia que Felipe había adoptado en el caso del cardenal Carranza: quería que el «trabajo sucio» estuviese hecho antes de que él llegara.[385]

Como los acontecimientos pronto demostrarían, este cambio en los planes de Felipe fue un error capital: solo el regreso del rey a Bruselas habría podido estabilizar la situación. Si Orange y los demás nobles que habían huido a Alemania rechazaban un emplazamiento directo para explicar en persona su comportamiento a Felipe, esto seguramente les habría desacreditado tanto en su país como en el extranjero. Si el rey hubiera estado presente, también les habría resultado difícil organizar una invasión de los Países Bajos como hicieron contra Alba en 1568; e, incluso, si lo hubieran intentado, habrían sido muy pocos, o ninguno, los gobernantes alemanes que les hubieran permitido reclutar tropas en sus dominios. Finalmente, la presencia del rey habría puesto muy difícil a los Estados Generales negar el apoyo financiero necesario para mantener su corte y pagar a las tropas españolas.

¿Por qué, entonces, cambió Felipe de opinión respecto al «viaje que nunca se hizo»? Quizá todo se redujo a una cuestión de fechas. En su larga reunión con Alba en abril, el rey se había mostrado de acuerdo en zarpar de España el 15 de agosto. Sin

embargo, el duque no llegó a Bruselas hasta el 22 de ese mes. Dado que incluso el correo más rápido necesitaba diez días para llegar a Madrid y que el rey y su corte necesitarían otro mes para alcanzar la costa cantábrica, donde le aguardaba la flota, la salida no podría producirse hasta octubre, «quando ya no se zufriese meterme yo en aquella mar sin gran aventura de los que allí avíamos de yr».[386] En todo caso, cuando llegó octubre, el rey tenía otra razón para permanecer en España: estaba a punto de volver a ser padre. En agosto de 1566, la reina dio a luz a Isabel Clara Eugenia y, a principios del año siguiente, volvió a quedarse embarazada. Cuando el duque de Alba salió de Aranjuez, la reina estaba segura de que su parto se situaría entre el 10 y el 15 de octubre. A diferencia de María Tudor, Isabel había calculado correctamente: parió a su segunda hija, Catalina Micaela, el 10 de octubre de 1567.

«A Su Majestad se ofrecerán otros negocios de importancia»

Así pues, Felipe tenía ya tres hijos, y una mujer fértil e inteligente para ejercer como su regente: todo sugiere que los preparativos para su regreso a los Países Bajos hubieran podido retomarse en 1568. Pero, como el desventurado barón de Montigny había advertido al rey en julio de 1566, cualquier retraso significaba que «a Su Majestad se ofrecerán otros negocios de importancia» que le forzarían a cambiar sus planes. Y, de hecho, tres «negocios» completamente desvinculados de los Países Bajos —dos surgidos en América y uno en España— obligaron a Felipe a permanecer en la península ibérica.

En 1562, un grupo de hugonotes zarparon hacia La Florida y establecieron allí una colonia fortificada que llamaron Nueva Francia, desde la cual podían amenazar a cualquier flota que regresara a Europa, dado que todas tenían que atravesar el canal de las Bahamas para ganar los vientos del este que les llevarían a

casa. Pero las fuerzas de Felipe apresaron a algunos colonos, y durante su interrogatorio revelaron ciertos detalles de la localización, tamaño y defensas de la base hugonota. También declararon que una segunda expedición, que entonces se estaba preparando en Francia, pronto les proporcionaría refuerzos. Estas alarmantes noticias llegaron al rey en marzo de 1565, y enseguida firmó cartas instando a Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, que tenía una amplia experiencia en comandar flotas, a zarpar con una fuerza expedicionaria desde Sevilla y tomar posesión de La Florida.

El rey dudó en autorizar un ataque directo a los franceses, debido a que la reina Isabel estaba a punto de reunirse con Catalina de Médicis en Bayona para resolver sus diferencias amigablemente, pero Alba, jefe de la delegación hispana, le aconsejó mantenerse fuerte. El duque recomendó al rey equipar una nueva flota «de manera que se pudiesen echar con brevedad [a los franceses] de donde estaban» y, al mismo tiempo, «mandar que los del Consejo de Indias pusiesen en escripto las razones que por parte de Su Magestad se tenían para que franceses no pudiesen venir a poblar allí», un documento que Alba presentaría a los franceses en Bayona.[387] En junio de 1565, mientras Alba e Isabel discutían con Catalina en Bayona, una segunda flota de ocho barcos, equipados con dieciséis cañones de asedio y más de mil hombres (la mitad de ellos soldados), partió de Sevilla. El rey esperaba que cuando los hugonotes en Francia se enteraran del tamaño de la flota de Menéndez, «tendrían myedo dél y, podría ser, dexasen la jornada», pero la segunda expedición francesa había zarpado ya.[388]

Era demasiado tarde para esperar refuerzos, de modo que Menéndez tuvo que contentarse con las fuerzas de que disponía. Tras construir un fuerte que llamó San Agustín, lanzó a continuación un ataque sorpresa que se saldó con la captura

de la colonia francesa. Menéndez perdonó la vida de mujeres y niños, pero mandó ejecutar a la mayoría de los varones a sangre fría y encarcelar a los restantes. Las noticias de estos acontecimientos llegaron a España en febrero de 1566; Felipe aprobó las ejecuciones y ordenó que los supervivientes fueran condenados a pasar el resto de su vida remando en sus galeras. También ordenó la construcción de doce embarcaciones conocidas como galizabras en los astilleros de Bilbao a fin de constituir una Armada de Indias permanente, dedicada a salvaguardar el Caribe y La Florida frente a cualquier otro ataque protestante. El monto total que Felipe tuvo que pagar por esta considerable ampliación de sus dominios americanos apenas alcanzó los 250.000 ducados, una cifra equivalente a solo un cuarto del coste de enviar al duque de Alba a Flandes.

A pesar de este éxito, Felipe nunca pudo descartar del todo el riesgo de otra incursión francesa, y esta preocupación influyó en su respuesta a un nuevo desafío a su control que tuvo lugar en Nueva España poco después. Tras la muerte de Velasco en 1564, algunos de los descendientes de los primeros conquistadores exigieron al rey que el hijo de Hernán Cortés, don Martín Cortés —marqués del Valle y el mayor encomendero del virreinato—, fuera nombrado su capitán general y solicitaron el derecho a reunirse en asamblea (Parlamento) para debatir y decidir los asuntos novohispanos. Dos años más tarde, los oidores (jueces) de la Audiencia, que gobernaban Nueva España hasta que llegara el nuevo virrey, recibieron noticias de que varios encomenderos planeaban ir mucho más lejos y organizar una «rebelión y alzamiento» dirigida «[a] matar a los dichos oydores y a otros que acudiessen al servicio de Su Magestad, y alçarse con esta tierra y eligir rey» a don Martín, al tiempo que mantenían relaciones con otros encomenderos descontentos en Guatemala y Perú. Los oidores reaccionaron con firmeza; después de todo, apenas hacía cinco

años que Lope de Aguirre había fortificado la isla Margarita, declarándose a sí mismo «rey del Perú» y proclamando que se «desnatur[alizaba] de los reynos de España y que no conozco por mi rey al de Castilla», y algunos de los seguidores de Aguirre ya habían participado en otras tentativas para librarse de la soberanía española.[389] El 16 de julio de 1566, los jueces arrestaron y juzgaron a Cortés y algunos otros, dos de los cuales fueron ejecutados casi inmediatamente. En este punto llegó un nuevo virrey, el marqués de Falces, que suspendió la sentencia de Cortés y le envió a España bajo custodia. Los oidores acusaron a Falces de simpatizar con los rebeldes y exigieron al rey que le retirara.

Las noticias de estos dramáticos acontecimientos llegaron a España en marzo de 1567. El embajador portugués en Madrid se enteró de que «en la Nueva España se conjuraron setecientos moradores para levantarse contra el rey o virrey», mientras que su colega francés, el barón Fourquevaux, señalaba que en aquel momento «el rey tiene tantas regiones por las que preocuparse que no puede ocuparse de todas ellas».[390] Felipe compartía estas preocupaciones y por tanto actuó rápidamente. Mandó regresar a Falces y envió a unos comisionados especiales para investigar «la rebelión y alzamiento que se pretendió hazer contra nuestro servicio en la Nueva España». Finalmente, los comisionados y el Consejo de Indias juzgaron a casi cien personas (entre ellas veintidós encomenderos y doce clérigos), de las cuales ejecutaron a diez «por el delito de rebelión» y sentenciaron a otras a galeras o al «destierro perpetuo de las Yndias».[391] La rebelión de Martín Cortés sería la última en Nueva España en más de un siglo.

Felipe demostró así que podía ocuparse de «otros negocios de importancia» en el hemisferio occidental sin desviar su atención de los Países Bajos. No podía decirse lo mismo de los problemas familiares. A lo largo de 1567, el comportamiento

de su hijo y heredero, don Carlos, constituyó un grave motivo de preocupación y, en enero del año siguiente, Felipe decidió que su heredero representaba una seria amenaza para la seguridad, por lo que mandó arrestarle y encarcelarle. Este hecho no pudo por menos que afectar al plan de Felipe de regresar a los Países Bajos, y el proceso por el cual llegó a asumir estas consecuencias puede vislumbrarse en la carta al emperador Maximiliano en la que explica las razones para el arresto de su hijo. El borrador decía originalmente «pienso ir a Flandes al verano», pero, al releerlo, el rey cambió esta frase por «no yendo yo este año a Flandes».[392]

Poco imaginaba Felipe, cuando efectuó esta pequeña mudanza, que «este año» de 1568 no solo sería testigo de la muerte de su heredero, sino también de la de su esposa; y, además, que estallaría una revuelta en la propia España protagonizada por los moriscos de Granada. Ahora bien, las predicciones de Montigny, que por entonces languidecía en prisión acusado de traición, y de Fourquevaux quedaron ampliamente demostradas. Dadas las dimensiones de la Monarquía española, el aplazamiento de una decisión importante siempre implicaba el riesgo de que, entre tanto, «a Su Majestad se ofrecerán otros negocios de importancia» y que «el rey tiene tantas regiones por las que preocuparse que no puede ocuparse de todas ellas».

9. El rey y su familia

Felipe II disfrutó de escasa vida familiar durante las dos décadas siguientes a la muerte de su madre en 1539. Su padre partió de España casi inmediatamente, dejando órdenes precisas para limitar el tiempo que Felipe podía pasar con sus hermanas María y Juana; y aunque se casó con su prima María Manuela en 1543, el emperador también redujo el tiempo que podían pasar juntos, hasta que, dieciocho meses más tarde, la muerte de ella le dejó viudo a la edad de dieciocho años *(véase capítulo 2)*. Entre 1548 y 1551, Felipe dejó en España tanto a su único hijo, don Carlos, como a sus dos hermanas para recorrer el norte de Europa con su padre, pasando también largas temporadas con su tía María de Hungría, quien al parecer no le tenía ninguna simpatía, y con su tío Fernando, por quien Felipe sentía un gran afecto. En cuanto regresó a España, su hermana María, casada con su primo Maximiliano, salió para Austria. Felipe solo la vio una vez a lo largo de las siguientes tres décadas. Su hermana Juana también se marchó de España para casarse en 1552 y, aunque regresó dos años más tarde, al poco tiempo Felipe zarpó hacia Inglaterra para casarse con María Tudor. No volvió hasta pasados más de cinco años.

Incluso los meses que Felipe permaneció en Inglaterra en 1554 y 1555 aportaron pocos elementos de vida familiar, dado que no llevó a ningún pariente con él y la única hermana de la reina, Isabel Tudor, pasó la mayor parte de ese tiempo en prisión o desterrada de la corte bajo sospecha de traición. Después, en Bruselas, Felipe vivió casi un año con su padre y sus tías María y Leonor, pero ellos tres regresaron a España en 1556 y nunca volvió a verles. Al año siguiente, pasó tres meses más con su esposa en Inglaterra, pero de sus otros parientes solo tenía la compañía de su medio hermana Margarita de Parma y el hijo de esta, Alejandro, que le acompañaron tanto en

Londres como en Bruselas.[⇒]

Esta soledad familiar cesó únicamente en 1559, cuando Felipe se reunió con Juana y don Carlos, conoció a su hermano don Juan y, poco después, se casó con Isabel de Valois *(véase capítulo 7)*. Felipe se convirtió al fin en el jefe de su propia familia, una posición que quedó reflejada en los numerosos retratos en los que el modelo sujeta un medallón o camafeo con la imagen del rey [véase lámina 29]. Todos —esposas, hermanos, hijos y otros parientes cercanos— formaron parte de una familia que proporcionaba a Felipe un apoyo importante, tanto emocional como práctico, para enfrentar las presiones y los problemas ineludibles de un imperio en el que no se ponía el sol.

El rey y sus hermanos

Aunque sabemos muy poco de las relaciones de Felipe con sus parientes más próximos cuando estaban bajo el mismo techo, sus prolongadas separaciones les impulsaban a escribir en sus cartas las cosas que de otro modo se habrían comunicado en persona. La primera correspondencia familiar íntima que poseemos es la serie de cartas ológrafas escritas a su cuñado Maximiliano tras su matrimonio con María en 1548. Felipe informaba al «rey de Bohemia mi hermano» de sus actividades («Mañana començaré las caças de Alemania […]. Quisiera mucho azer compañía en ellas a Vuestra Alteza»), decepciones («el preñado de la reyna, que teníamos por tan cierto, no lo ha sido. Mejor lo hazen Vuestra Alteza y mi hermana que ella y yo») y alegrías («estoy muy contento porque pienso estar presto en Flandes y más cerca de Vuestra Alteza»).[393]

Felipe también mantuvo una intensa correspondencia con su hermana María a lo largo de los años en los que permanecieron separados. Sabemos que leía sus cartas con atención, porque muchas de ellas contienen anotaciones de su puño y letra. En 1569, mientras ultimaba los preparativos del

viaje de su sobrina y futura esposa, Ana, desde Alemania a España, Felipe esperaba que María viniera con su hija, porque «seríame de tanto contentamiento verla». Aseguró a sus enviados ante la corte imperial, «soy cierto que le será [a María] de tanto contentamiento y satisfacción vernos juntos, ella y yo y la Sereníssima Princesa, nuestra hermana [Juana]», que vendría, «tanto más que entre hermanos que tanto nos amamos».[394] A pesar de que en esta ocasión María decepcionó a su hermano, ella defendió los intereses de España en Alemania e incluso llegó a espiar en algunas ocasiones a su marido. Por ejemplo, en 1567, María le dijo a un diplomático español, «en secreto, que leyendo estos días unas cartas que estaban en la mesa del emperador» descubrió algunos asuntos que su hermano debía conocer, de modo que se los transmitió. Tres años más tarde, el rey revelaba que él también escondía algunas materias a su cuñado. Le decía a su embajador ante la corte imperial:

> A mi hermana escribo dos cartas: una de los negocios que podrá mostrar al emperador, esta le enviaréis en abriendo el pliego; y otra de algunos particulares que han de ser para ella sola, sin que el emperador ni otro ninguno lo sepa, esta irá aparte, con cubierta de Zayas [secretario de Estado] para vos, como si fuese suya. Habeisla de tener muy secreta, y cuando vayáis a mi hermana diréis, sin que nadie lo entienda, cómo le tenéis otra carta particular, que ella mire cómo y cuándo se la habéis de dar.[395]

Por lo general, la correspondencia de María con su hermano se centraba en el bienestar de sus hijos residentes en la corte de España (primero Rodolfo y Ernesto, y luego Ana, Alberto y Wenceslao), y a partir de 1570 empezó a aconsejar a Felipe, entonces también su yerno, sobre temas tan íntimos como la manera de evitar «competençias» entre los niños de Ana y las dos hijas de Felipe con Isabel de Valois. Pero los hermanos también compartían recuerdos referentes a cosas que sus padres habían dicho o hecho, o pedían favores para aquellos que les habían servido. Por ejemplo, en 1573, María le escribió a Felipe que

la muerte de Ruy Gómez me a pesado en estremo por cuan buen criado era de Vuestra Alteza, y de tanto tiempo, y por acabarse en él los de nuestra madre. Bien sé que Vuestra Alteza le ha de hacer tanta merced después de muerto como vivo, pues la a más menester, mas no puedo dejar de suplicar a Vuestra Alteza que sea ansy por hazer lo que devo, y porque tengo mucha lástima a su muger.

Poco después, María se lamentaba con su hermano de otra pérdida mucho más dolorosa: la muerte de «nuestra hermana» Juana. Al recibir la noticia, María le confió a Felipe: «No puedo dejar de confesar a Vuestra Alteza que me allo muy sola syn ella, por más lejos que estávamos». Y esta era en suma la finalidad de toda esta correspondencia íntima: mantener los lazos entre los tres «hermanos que tanto nos amamos» aunque estuvieran lejos.[396]

Las Descalzas Reales: un «espacio femenino» para la familia real

En 1554 Felipe escogió a su hermana Juana, entonces viuda y de solo diecinueve años, como regente de las Españas en su ausencia, a pesar de la fuerte objeción de su padre de que «la princesa es más altiva y entonces ovo tales desórdenes».[397] La princesa tenía una vida espiritual muy activa, y ya había tomado los votos simples de pobreza, castidad y obediencia exigidos a todos los novicios de la orden jesuita. De este modo, se convirtió en su único miembro femenino conocido, aunque ingresó con el nombre ficticio de Mateo Sánchez. En 1559, creó un convento de clarisas muy cerca del Alcázar Real de Madrid, pronto conocido como las Descalzas Reales, e hizo incorporar un aposento real. Después de que Felipe trasladara su corte a Madrid dos años más tarde, ese aposento constituyó un espacio femenino en la capital de la monarquía donde la reina y los infantes pudieron presenciar actos religiosos y disfrutar, aunque brevemente, la vida claustral, donde «las blandas camas y delicadas camisas se trocaban en cilicios y en tablas duras» y «las conversaciones que suelen usarse en los

palacios del mundo, ya no eran sino gemidos de coraçon y oraciones continuas».[398]

Pero Juana nunca dejó de ser «la princesa». Se pudo ver un pequeño ejemplo de su espíritu «altivo» cuando los jueces de la Inquisición la entrevistaron en 1562 como «testigo de abono» nombrado por Bartolomé de Carranza. Como a todos los testigos, con excepción del mismo rey, los jueces le pidieron primero a Juana su edad, y «dixo que es de edad de cincuenta años». ¡Qué mentira descarada! En aquel momento, como todo el mundo sabía, no tenía sino veintisiete. Sin duda, la hija de Carlos V consideraba tales preguntas impertinentes.[399]

Hasta 1570 Juana mantuvo un aposento en el Alcázar de Madrid, y, dada la juventud de la reina y del príncipe, durante las ausencias de Felipe ella presidía la corte. Se juntaba con la reina Isabel casi todos los días, acompañándola a misa y otros servicios religiosos en la capilla del palacio, así como visitando conventos y santuarios fuera. También las dos organizaron mascaradas: por ejemplo, la princesa y la reina tenían «ordenada una brava máscara de todas sus damas» en el palacio en honor del día de San Sebastián, el 20 de enero de 1568, pero el arresto de don Carlos el día anterior las obligó a cancelarla. El embajador portugués, Francisco Pereira, acudió inmediatamente a visitar a Juana, «que hallé distraída en lágrimas de tal acontecimiento. La consolé lo mejor que pude, pero aproveché poco, que tal está su alteza». Unos pocos meses más tarde, Juana volvería a llorar con motivo de la muerte de Isabel, que fue enterrada en las Descalzas a petición suya. La princesa cuidó de las dos infantas huérfanas, a quienes, según le explicaba a la madre de Isabel, Catalina de Médicis, «quiero y tengo por tan hijas como ella».[400]

Juana continuó siendo la figura central de la familia real, y cuando estaba enferma, el rey se preocupaba por ella. «Oy no

he savido de my hermana», escribió a un ministro de confianza desde El Pardo un día que Juana, en Madrid, tenía problemas de salud. «Concertaréis con [el doctor] Vallés que os dé a las noches un papel para my de cómo avrá estado desde la noche de antes, que me embiaréis con los correos de cada noche». Después de 1570, la princesa pasaba más tiempo en las Descalzas, donde vivió como una recogida entre su magnífica colección de reliquias, que guardaba en un oratorio especial situado entre su cámara y el convento, junto a sus cuadros religiosos y una galería de retratos de familiares, para ayudarla a tenerles presentes en sus oraciones. Pero todavía recibía con frecuencia a la reina Ana y a sus sobrinos en su aposento. Cuando Juana repentinamente murió en 1573, Felipe quedó consternado, «porque le amaba tanto», y no pudo «disimular su sentimiento».[401]

Por ser una fundación real, las Descalzas pasó a estar bajo el patrocinio directo de Felipe y por eso continuó sirviendo de refugio a las mujeres de su familia. Así, entre 1580 y 1583, mientras el rey residía en Portugal, sus hijos pasaban mucho tiempo en el convento; y cuando en 1582 la emperatriz María llegó a Madrid, se instaló en el aposento de su difunta hermana, donde acogió a los hijos de Felipe y Ana —por tanto, nietos suyos—, así como a sus sobrinas, las hijas de Felipe e Isabel de Valois.

«Ysabel de Francia, Reyna de Castilla»

Felipe vivió casi ocho años con su tercera esposa, mucho más tiempo que con sus mujeres anteriores. Cuando «Ysabel de Francia, Reyna de Castilla», como ella se intitulaba, contrajo matrimonio con Felipe en enero de 1560, tenía catorce años y vivía una adolescencia perezosa e indulgente, levantándose y vistiéndose a horas estrambóticas, comiendo cuando le venía en gana y marchándose a la cama con cualquier excusa. Además,

también era poco previsora. Inicialmente, Felipe asignó 80.000 ducados para los gastos anuales de la Casa de su esposa (en comparación con los 250.000 para su propia Casa, capilla, guardias y los salarios de todos los funcionarios del gobierno central), pero, pasados dos años, tuvo que aumentar la cantidad a 100.000 ducados. Sin embargo, la joven reina siguió gastando más de lo que recibía: en 1565, sus deudas llegaron a sumar 180.000 ducados.

¿Adónde iba todo ese dinero? Al parecer, compraba pocos libros y, aunque el rey contrató a Sofonisba Anguissola —la talentosa hija de un diplomático italiano— para que la enseñara a pintar, Isabel prefirió posar para Sofonisba, quien le realizó numerosos retratos, que la reina hizo copiar para mandarlos a sus parientes. Tampoco gastaba dinero en entretener a sus invitados. Salvo a través de otros miembros de la familia real, pocos podían obtener acceso a ella sin enfrentarse a complicadas gestiones previas. Los embajadores extranjeros y dignatarios podían presentarle sus respetos, pero solo mediante cita, y nunca mientras el rey se encontrara ausente de la capital. Las cuentas de su Casa solo revelan cuatro pasatiempos activos: la danza (Isabel compró violas, vihuelas, flautas, un órgano y tres arpas, y tenía empleado a un maestro de danza); los juegos de mesa (le gustaban los naipes, dados, trucos y tejos, las rifas o echar suertes; y a menudo tenía que pedir dinero a los servidores de su casa para seguir jugando y perdiendo); y, sobre todo, las comedias y los vestidos. Las cuentas de la Casa de la Reina revelan que esta organizó más de treinta comedias entre 1561 y 1568, siete de ellas a cargo del famoso «representante» Lope de Rueda, quien cobraba diez ducados en metálico por cada función. El día de Reyes de 1565, la reina y la princesa Juana organizaron algunos espectáculos combinados que culminaron con una mascarada y una comedia en la que participaron escritores, sastres, el principal paisajista real —

Antonio de las Viñas, que percibió cien ducados «por la ocupación de su persona en pintar los lienços y hazer otras cossas que fueron necessarias para la sobredicha comedia»— y dos escultores traídos por el rey de Italia que recibieron cien y setenta ducados respectivamente por fabricar «figuras de bulto y otras cosas para la sosodicha comedia». La suma total gastada en preparar aquella tarde de entretenimiento puede que alcanzara los 50.000 ducados.[402]

Isabel también gastaba muchísimo dinero en los espectaculares y costosos trajes con los que aparece en sus retratos: los llevaba por si acaso Felipe le hacía una visita. Esas visitas llegaron a ser más frecuentes desde el verano en que Isabel empezó a menstruar, y en enero de 1562, según su camarera, «después de haber rezado sus oraciones, duerme toda la noche con el rey su marido, quien nunca se ausenta sin una buena causa». Pero un año más tarde el embajador veneciano resaltaba la falta de atención de Felipe hacia Isabel, afirmando que «usa el rey en el palacio todas maneras de honor y amor» hacia su esposa, «pero en secreto le dio poca satisfacción». De hecho, continuaba, Felipe a menudo visitaba a su esposa por «la noche a horas extraordinarias» cuando ella ya se había quedado dormida, y «contentándose de haber hecho esta demostración, se marchó».[403] La madre de Isabel, Catalina de Médicis, animó a su hija a ignorar estas afrentas y hacer todo lo que pudiera por agradar a su marido, pero, pocos meses más tarde, el rey anunció que la dejaba para visitar a sus súbditos aragoneses. El rey no tenía pensado hacerlo así —el propósito del viaje era garantizar el juramento de don Carlos como príncipe heredero de la Corona de Aragón—, pero cuando su hijo se puso demasiado enfermo para poder viajar, Felipe decidió que se quedara también Isabel. Según Pereira, el embajador portugués, la reina se puso furiosa y «procura todo lo que le es posible ir con el rey». Para calmarla, Felipe prometió que podría salir más

tarde para acompañarle, y se dispuso a partir a toda prisa, aunque poco después Ruy Gómez le aseguró a Pereira que el rey no tenía ninguna intención de mandar llamar a Isabel. Al contrario, dejó órdenes expresas de que ella y sus damas solo pudieran salir de su aposento para oír misa en la capilla de palacio o para cenar; que a partir de las dos de la tarde nadie podía entrar ni salir; y que a las diez de la noche los guardias debían dejar cerradas sus estancias. Al poco tiempo, la reina se dio cuenta de que había sido su insistencia lo que llevó a su marido a mentirle. «Está con mucho sentimiento», informó Pereira, reparando en las «lágrimas que tenía lloradas por la partida del rey».[404]

Catalina de Médicis compartía la indignación de su hija, y ordenó a su embajador que le recordara a Felipe en una audiencia «el deseo que tenemos de que nazca algún niño» y le expresara la esperanza de que él no tardara en «justificar nuestra opinión de que es un buen marido». Al oírlo, Felipe, por una vez, perdió el control y estalló en carcajadas, rogando al embajador que garantizara a su suegra que «se esforzaría todo lo posible por mantener la reputación que se había ganado».[405]

Al parecer, Isabel aprovechó esos nueve meses de aislamiento para aprender castellano con el fin de entretener mejor a su marido cuando volviera, porque más tarde era capaz de escribir de su puño y letra, en un español perfecto, las treinta y dos páginas de su testamento, que incluía un legado de dos mil ducados a «Claudio, my maestro, que me enseñó a leer y escribir».[406] De todas maneras, cuando en mayo de 1564 Felipe se reunió con su mujer, ahora de dieciocho años, pronto se mostró «buen marido». Llevó a Isabel a Aranjuez, donde los dos solos compartían comidas al aire libre en los retirados jardines: la reina afirmaba que no podía escribir a su familia porque pasaba casi todo su tiempo con el rey, cuyo amor, decía, le llenaba de felicidad. Para julio ya estaba embarazada. Pero

luego sobrevinieron complicaciones que obligaron a Isabel a guardar cama, y, al parecer, las purgas, enemas y sangrías de los médicos hicieron que el embarazo se malograra. Finalmente se recuperó, aunque las cicatrices de las incisiones y los torniquetes tardaron meses en desaparecer.

Durante toda aquella enfermedad, Felipe permaneció en Madrid, donde pasaba varias horas al día junto al lecho de su esposa. Cuando esta se recuperó, con su permiso se marchó a inspeccionar los avances de El Escorial, no sin antes preguntar a los médicos «si podrían dormir juntos cuando él volviera». La respuesta debió de ser afirmativa porque, cuando en 1565, el embajador francés transmitió otro requerimiento de Catalina de Médicis para tener nietos, la reina «respondió con una sonrisa que el problema residía en ella, y no en el rey, su marido». La situación cambió poco después, ¡debido aparentemente al entusiasmo de su marido por las reliquias! Tras complejas negociaciones con la corte francesa, Felipe consiguió el regreso del cuerpo de san Eugenio a su ciudad de nacimiento, Toledo, y en noviembre de 1565 Isabel salió de palacio para venerar el paso de las reliquias, al tiempo que hacía el juramento de llamar a su hijo como el santo si conseguía quedarse encinta. Parece que esto impresionó al santo, ya que nueve meses después la reina daba a luz a su primera hija, a quien llamó Isabel Clara Eugenia. La reina informó al embajador francés de que «creía haber concebido a la infanta aquella noche, dado que después de ver las reliquias volvió con su marido».[407]

Nada más confirmarse el embarazo, el embajador francés escribió que, según «sus domésticos», el afecto de Felipe por su esposa «crece cada vez más desde que está embarazada, tanto que pasa con ella dos horas cada tarde» y en «todo momento le demuestra su cariño de formas hasta ahora nunca vistas».[408] En junio, la pareja se trasladó al Bosque de Segovia, lugar que

Felipe consideraba más sano y agradable que Madrid, y allí siguieron compartiendo mucho tiempo juntos. El 1 de agosto, cuando Isabel creyó que ya estaba de parto, el rey saltó de la cama para estar con ella; y aunque resultó ser una falsa alarma, a partir de entonces Felipe la estuvo visitando hasta cinco veces al día. Cuando el día 11 comenzó el parto, el rey permaneció junto al lecho de su esposa, cogiéndole la mano y administrándole una poción especial enviada por Catalina de Médicis para aliviar el dolor en el momento del alumbramiento. Después, Felipe se mostró tremendamente orgulloso y satisfecho de su nueva paternidad, pero empezó a ponerse nervioso ante el brete de tener que llevar en brazos al bebé a la pila bautismal. Según el embajador francés, quien debió de conocer la historia por la reina, Felipe se puso a practicar «paseándose con un gran muñeco en brazos de un lado a otro de la habitación; pero al final no consiguió hacerlo bien, por lo que tuvo que dejar que fuera don Juan de Austria quien llevara en brazos a la infanta». Es posible que el nerviosismo del rey se desatara debido a la fiebre puerperal que sufrió Isabel, como le había ocurrido a su primera esposa, María Manuela, pero Isabel se recuperó pronto y el embajador Fourquevaux predijo que, ahora que su fertilidad estaba demostrada, «la reina nos dará un hijo cada año».[409] Su pronóstico no tardó en cumplirse: a principios de 1567, la reina volvió a quedarse embarazada.

Aunque la noticia fue motivo de regocijo en toda España, supuso un serio dilema para el rey: acababa de prometer viajar a los Países Bajos a restaurar el orden y, como en 1563, Isabel no estaba dispuesta a que su marido se fuera sin ella. Para su alivio, Felipe aceptó —un hijo nacido en los Países Bajos sería considerado como un «príncipe nativo», lo que tal vez apaciguaría a sus súbditos flamencos—, por lo que hizo planes para que ella fuera a través de Francia, donde podría ver a sus

parientes, mientras él zarpaba hacia Flandes. Luego se reunirían en Bruselas. Pero dada la todavía turbulenta situación en los Países Bajos, en agosto de 1567 Felipe resolvió que la situación no permitía a la familia real salir de España *(véase capítulo 8)*.

Una vez más, Felipe permaneció junto a su mujer durante el trabajo del parto, pero esta vez mostró su decepción al ver que se trataba de otra niña: Catalina Micaela. En esta ocasión ni siquiera se quedó para el bautizo. Sin embargo, poco después, la reina volvió a estar embarazada, y pasaba el tiempo jugando a las cartas, los aros y los dados, oyendo contar chistes a sus bufones o comiendo con Juana y algunas de sus damas en la Casa de Campo. Luego, en septiembre, Isabel cayó enferma: se desmayaba a menudo, sufría temblores y comía y dormía poco e irregularmente. Una vez más, los médicos volvieron a aplicarle enemas y sangrías mientras el rey permanecía a su lado, cogiéndole la mano, calmándola y consolándola. El 3 de octubre de 1568 oyeron juntos misa por última vez.

Durante todo su matrimonio, Isabel se había esforzado por influir en su marido en todos los asuntos concernientes a Francia. Lograba convencer a Felipe para que concediera audiencias al embajador francés cuando el rey se negaba a recibir a todos los demás; debatía con él sobre las cuestiones en las que su madre, Catalina, necesitaba apoyo; y a veces filtraba incluso información confidencial a diplomáticos franceses. Ahora, al sentir que su vida se acercaba al final, con su nueva fluidez en castellano, Isabel pidió a su marido que le prometiera que continuaría apoyando a su hermano, el rey de Francia. Cuando Felipe se mostró de acuerdo, la reina cambió de objetivo: «Asió del rey la reyna, y no le dexó ir de su presencia, hasta que le diesse su palabra de remediar y faborescer a todos sus criados y criadas, en especial a las extrangeras francesas. Y el rey la prometió y dio su fe y palabra que haría como se le pedía, y le besó la mano». Por último, le dijo a Felipe que, igual que

ella siempre le había pedido a Dios que le concediera a su marido larga vida mientras estuvo a su lado, cuando llegara al cielo (lo que sabía que ocurriría pronto) continuaría haciendo lo mismo. En ese momento Felipe se derrumbó: conmovido por el hecho de «que la reyna, estando tan trabajada y con tan mortales congoxas, hablaba con tanta espíritu semejantes palabras, no pudiendo detener las muchas lágrimas que le caían, se salió fuera del aposento». Unas horas después, Isabel dio a luz a otra niña. Ambas murieron al poco tiempo.[410]

La reina fue enterrada en las Descalzas Reales, el lugar que tanto solaz le había proporcionado, mientras que el rey se trasladó a San Jerónimo a llorarla. Durante más de dos semanas, se negó a ver documentos, a ministros o a embajadores, uniéndose a los monjes en las continuas misas que estos dijeron por el alma de su difunta esposa; cuando salió, se fue directamente a El Escorial a pasar otro periodo de retiro. En Nochebuena, concedió una audiencia al embajador francés, quien le leyó en voz alta una carta de condolencia de Catalina de Médicis, con la cual, según informó el embajador, el rey volvió a echarse a llorar. Seis meses después le dijo a su exsuegra que las dos hijas de Isabel, de dos y tres años de edad, eran «todo el consuelo que me ha quedado de hauerme privado Nuestro Señor de la compañía de su madre».[411]

Vida familiar al fin

Sin heredero ni esposa, Felipe sabía que era imprescindible volver a casarse, y pronto acordó con su hermana María que se casaría con Ana, hija mayor de esta y de Maximiliano, primo de Felipe; pero, para su sorpresa, Pío V se negó a conceder la dispensa necesaria. En una carta ológrafa, informó al rey de que «aunque algunos de nuestros predecesores han concedido dispensas en casos de impedimentos similares», se habían equivocado: Pío pensaba que ningún papa tenía poder para

permitir a un príncipe casarse con su propia sobrina. Además, añadía el papa deliberadamente, «hemos visto los malos resultados que se derivan de estos matrimonios en primer grado», una referencia descarada a los «defectos de la naturaleza» que se habían experimentado recientemente con su hijo don Carlos *(véase capítulo 10)*.[412]

Felipe también mantenía cierta reticencia sobre casarse con su sobrina. En una carta ológrafa de trece páginas, se quejaba al duque de Alba de que «no es muy conforme a my contentamyento el casarme, y mucho menos agora que nunca, que cierto lo quixera harto escusar». Este desagrado por el matrimonio que expresaba entonces era el mismo que había manifestado una década antes, cuando pensaba que tendría que casarse con Isabel Tudor *(véase capítulo 7)*: «A la verdad estoy muy cansado y quebrantado y sin ningún contentamyento de nada, y esto pasárase mejor a solas. Mas, como digo, por el servicio de Dios yo me sacrifico a todo».[413] El 14 de noviembre de 1570, en Segovia, Felipe —de cuarenta y tres años de edad — se casó con su sobrina, la archiduquesa Ana de Austria, de veintiuno.

Parece que los novios atravesaron algunos problemas, porque tres meses después de celebrarse el matrimonio, don Diego de Córdoba (cortesano que parecía saber todo lo que pasaba en la alcoba de su señor) se alegraba de que al fin el rey y la reina estuvieran durmiendo juntos todas las noches: «Téngalos Dios de su mano, y presto veamos el fruto que se desea. No pierden noche. De las cosas que solían hazellas perder, no ay memoria, por la bondad de Dios y della», aunque, añadía, «solo hay malo estar pocas oras *in lecto*».[414]

Una de esas «cosas» a las que se refería eran sin duda las numerosas restricciones que el rey impuso al entorno doméstico de su nueva esposa. Tres semanas antes del matrimonio, Felipe

informó al marqués de Ladrada, el mayordomo mayor de Ana, de que «no conviene que tenga [su casa] la orden que en tiempo de la reyna que aya gloria». A continuación enumeraba una larga lista de prohibiciones, cada una de ellas dirigidas a poner fin a algún aspecto de las pocas libertades de que disfrutó la difunta Isabel de Valois. Algunas iban dirigidas a mantener lejos a otros hombres («cuando la reina dançare retirada, no entrará sino el mayordomo mayor»); otras, a mantener cerca a las damas («quando alguna señora quissiere yr a palaçio, se a de preguntar a la camarera mayor quando, y a que oras de las que estuuiere ordenado lo podrá hazer […]. Han de ser quando los porteros tienen las puertas, y no a oras extraordinarias y prohiuidas»). En resumen, que «todo se haga como en el [tiempo] de my madre […] y conforme a lo que allí se hazía, se haga agora, y será lo más acertado».[415]

Fueran cuales fueren las «cosas», «desde el 20 de marzo [de 1571] falta su regla a la reina» y cuando Felipe llevó a su familia a Aranjuez, en mayo, insistió en que la reina viajara en literas y sillas. Cuando al mes siguiente fue a El Escorial, insistió en que Ana se quedara en el Alcázar de Madrid, si bien le preocupaba que allí pasara demasiado calor, por lo que le decía a Ladrada: «No ay duda sino que el aposento de la reyna está caluroso, a lo menos de noche, y así sería muy bien que se pase a dormyr solamente a my cámara para que esté fresca de noche». En julio volvía a expresar su preocupación: «Si la reyna quixese ir fuera, acordadle que baya en silla» para evitar el riesgo de caerse. Más avanzado aquel mismo año, cada vez que visitaba San Lorenzo, Felipe ordenaba a Ladrada: «Avisadme si se suelen sentir dolores algún día antes, porque no querría faltar de aý al parto». Regresó a tiempo, y pasó seis horas junto al lecho de Ana mientras, el 3 de diciembre de 1571, ella daba a luz a un hijo, el nuevo príncipe de Asturias, al que llamaron Fernando. Toda España se alegró de la noticia, y, como un perspicaz observador

anotó el día en que nació: «El rey está el más contento hombre que jamás se ha visto».[416]

Durante varios días, el *Diurnal* de Antonio Gracián no registra el tratamiento de ningún asunto de carácter oficial; y, pocos días más tarde, cuando algunos embajadores acudieron a felicitar oficialmente al orgulloso padre, le encontraron vestido con un jubón de seda negra, pantalones y medias de terciopelo de color plateado, y una capa de damasco ribeteada en piel. El 16 de diciembre, Felipe ocupó el lugar de honor en la procesión que fue desde el Alcázar a la iglesia de San Gil el Real para el bautizo de Fernando, celebrado por el cardenal Espinosa ante la presencia de un nutrido grupo de grandes de España y el cuerpo diplomático en pleno [véase lámina 30]. El rey se sentía tan eufórico por la feliz coincidencia del nacimiento con la batalla de Lepanto, ganada dos meses antes, que perdonó a varias personas condenadas por cazar sin permiso en los sitios reales «en gratitud a Nuestro Señor por la victoria en el mar y por el nacimiento de un hijo».[417] También encargó un enorme cuadro a Tiziano en el que se enlazaran ambos hechos; el pintor de corte de Felipe, Alonso Sánchez Coello, envió instrucciones y bocetos, previamente aprobados por el rey, para que *Felipe II ofreciendo al cielo al infante don Fernando* resaltara debidamente la relación directa y especial entre el Rey de los Cielos y el de España, así como el glorioso futuro que aguardaba al príncipe Fernando, a quien Tiziano situó en el centro de la composición [véase lámina 31].

Por fin había una gran familia en torno al rey. La reina Ana no solo dio a luz a siete hijos a lo largo de los siguientes diez años, sino que también trajo consigo a España a dos de sus hermanos menores, Alberto y Wenceslao, y se convirtió en una segunda madre de sus hijastras Isabel y Catalina. En la década de 1570, la familia real disfrutó de una confortable rutina de vida: el rey, su esposa, sus hijos y sus parientes más próximos

pasaban la mayor parte del invierno en el Alcázar de Madrid, y visitaban El Escorial en verano y para las principales festividades religiosas, Aranjuez en la primavera y El Pardo en otoño. En ocasiones Felipe visitaba solo alguno de sus reales sitios, pero, según un embajador, cuando vivían bajo el mismo techo

> Su Majestad visita a la reina tres veces al día: por la mañana antes de oír misa; durante el día antes de empezar a trabajar; y por la noche antes de acostarse. Tienen dos camas bajas, separadas dos palmos la una de la otra, pero que al estar cubiertas por una baja cortina, parecen una sola. El rey ama a su esposa tiernísimamente, y está con ella más que antes, marchándose rara vez de su lado. [418]

Y siempre que Felipe «se marchaba de su lado», los reyes intercambiaban cartas una o dos veces cada semana (Ana era bilingüe en alemán y castellano). Por ejemplo, en julio de 1571, Ladrada anunció a Felipe que «la reina nuestra señora me a dado esta noche esta carta para Vuestra Magestad», y la envió a El Escorial. Dos días más tarde, el rey contestó: «Aquí va la respuesta, que por aver yo llegado ayer algo cansado y aver tenido que despachar, no pude escribirla hasta esta mañana». En otra ocasión, Felipe comunicó a Ladrada que había leído «la carta de la reina en respuesta de la mýa» y «agora daréis a la reyna la que aquí va».[419]

Felipe también quiso recibir a menudo boletines médicos sobre su familia. «Me avisaréis cada día de su salud [de la reina] y de la del príncipe», ordenó a Ladrada, al abandonar Madrid cuando Fernando solo tenía dos semanas. Nueve meses después, cuando el príncipe cayó enfermo, Felipe volvió a ordenar a Ladrada: «Avisadme esta noche, a tiempo que yo no sea acostado, de cómo le abrá ido oy al príncipe». Por si acaso el marqués tenía dudas, el rey repitió: «Estos días que yo estaré fuera, hazedme despachar cada noche un correo como se solía hazer y que este trayga los despachos que ubiere para my y vos me [e]scribid cada noche con él de manera que yo lo sepa a la

mañana como avrá estado el príncipe aquel día». Poco antes de la Navidad de 1572, cuando Felipe salió para El Escorial de nuevo mientras el joven príncipe estaba enfermo, insistió en que Ladrada le enviara una relación de los médicos, «y a este propósito concertaréis con el correo mayor que despache los correos cada noche después que le aya embiado vuestro pliego, de manera que llegue a my a la mañana».[420] La salud del heredero, por tanto, determinaba el ritmo del gobierno entero.

Cada vez que la salud de Fernando se deterioraba, el rey pasaba las noches sin dormir. En octubre de 1572, Ladrada envió a El Escorial un boletín pesimista a las siete y media de la tarde. Felipe le informó de que «el correo vino a noche después de las doçe, y avía una hora que yo dormýa; y así fue un poco de desabrimyento, más no se puede cuando ay causa para ello como agora. Y por no desvelarme más que quando lo hago, me duermo mal después». Dos días más tarde, cuando recibió noticias de la recuperación de Fernando, el rey le decía a Ladrada: «A sido muy bien embiarme esta nueva, con que creo que se cobrará esta noche el sueño que se perdió la otra noche».[421] Felipe también se preocupaba por sus hijas. Quería que pasaran tiempo al aire libre —«Bien parece a Su Magestad que las señoras infantas salgan algunas vezes para que les dé ayre, pues no ay planta que sin él pueda crecer»— y que llevaran una vida sana. Durante una visita de primavera a Aranjuez, Ladrada debía asegurarse de que cada «infanta madrugue y haga exercicio, y por esto y por todo será bien que se acuesten temprano». Felipe también se preocupaba porque las infantas pasaban demasiado tiempo metidas en «libros de caballería» y mandó que «leyesen más libros de devoción».[422]

Normalmente, Felipe parecía menos atento a sus hijos pequeños. A pesar de que proporcionaba soldados de juguete a sus hijos y animaba a sus hijas para que tuvieran jaulas con aves canoras en su habitación, como él mismo había hecho cuarenta

años atrás, rara vez les dedicó su tiempo en exclusiva hasta que fueron adolescentes. En julio de 1575, en el punto álgido de una crisis financiera, el príncipe Fernando (entonces de tres años de edad) cayó gravemente enfermo y sus médicos se debatían desesperados por encontrar el mejor remedio. El rey hizo algunas recomendaciones sobre los alimentos más convenientes que debía tomar su debilitado hijo —tortillas, aunque «no sé que en la tortilla ubiese tocino: pero si le quixera [el príncipe] no creo que dexara de dársele a trueque de que coma»—, y pidió al mayordomo del príncipe, don Pedro Niño de Ribera, que le informara con frecuencia sobre cómo comía y dormía su hijo. Así, concluía Felipe, «creo que se hace lo que humanamente se puede, mas Dios es el que lo ha de hacer todo». Hasta aquí, el comportamiento como padre era modélico, pero cuando los médicos informaron al día siguiente de que el príncipe no comía las tortillas prescritas y pidieron al rey que acudiera en persona para animar al niño a tomarlas, Felipe se negó rotundamente. «En la edad que tiene, no creo que me tendría mucho respecto para lo del comer; que si es por myedo, más tendrá a su ama. Y no tiene tantos años», afirmaba Felipe, «para que le aprovechase el ir yo allá».[423]

Tal vez el rey no se sintiera capaz de enfrentarse a la muerte de otro niño en ese momento, debido a un traumático suceso acaecido dos semanas antes: su hijo Carlos Lorenzo, que aún no había cumplido los dos años, enfermó y murió. Felipe, entristecido, envió el «corpecito» de su hijo para que fuera enterrado en El Escorial y dirigió una lamentación poco habitual a uno de sus oficiales de Hacienda:

> Mirad lo que con razón yo sentiré, viéndome en cuarenta y ocho años de edad y con el príncipe de tres, dejándole la hacienda tan sin orden […]. Y demás de esto, ¡qué vejez tendré, pues parece que ya la comienzo, […] con no ver un día lo que tengo de vivir otro, no saber con qué se ha de sustentar lo que tanto es menester!

Luego, tres días después de la muerte de Carlos Lorenzo,

«nació el infante don Diego, consuelo de la pérdida y tristeza que tenían de sus padres, que ya era el tercer hijo de la reina doña Ana».[424]

Las preocupaciones volvieron muy pronto. En 1577, don Pedro Niño estaba intranquilo por la «salud del señor ynfante» Diego, entonces de dos años de edad: «No es cosa que da poco cuydado y en coyuntura que le destetamos; y cierto yo olgara mucho que sus magestades le bieran primero, porque está hermosísima creatura de gordo y rrecio y sano. Dios le guarde y a sus padres para que le goçen».[425] Aunque Diego superó esta crisis, al año siguiente el círculo familiar de Felipe se vio cruelmente roto: en agosto, su sobrino el rey Sebastián de Portugal murió en combate; en septiembre, falleció también su sobrino Wenceslao; y en octubre, primero murió su medio hermano don Juan en los Países Bajos y luego el príncipe Fernando en Madrid. Una vez más, Felipe se retiró a San Jerónimo a llorarles. Al principio de 1580 hubo ocasión para regocijarse: Ana dio a luz a la infanta María y, poco después, los reyes, el príncipe y las infantas Isabel y Catalina salieron de Madrid para Extremadura, dejando a sus hermanos pequeños María y Felipe (nacido en 1578) en el Alcázar. De nuevo, hubo otra catástrofe: por el mes de octubre, en Badajoz, la reina murió durante una epidemia de catarro que casi acabó también con la vida de su marido *(véase capítulo 15)*.

El padre solitario

Después de la muerte de la reina Ana, mientras Felipe proseguía su viaje hacia Lisboa, envió tanto a las dos infantas como al príncipe de vuelta a Madrid. Hasta su regreso en 1583, su único contacto fue epistolar: sus hijas mayores escribieron con regularidad a su padre, y, casi todos los lunes, este se sentaba, con sus recién llegadas cartas delante, a escribirles una respuesta. Cuando Catalina abandonó España tras su

matrimonio con el duque de Saboya, llevó con ella más de treinta de estas cartas dirigidas «a las infantas, mis hijas», y recibiría casi cien más de su padre. La supervivencia de estas misivas regias —un feliz contraste con la suerte de las que escribió a cada una de sus esposas, cartas que se quemaron— aportan un conocimiento único de la capacidad de Felipe para amar [véase lámina 32].

Las formas de la correspondencia resultan engañosas. Por un lado, Felipe nunca se dirigía a sus hijas adolescentes por sus nombres (solía referirse a Isabel como «vos, la mayor» y a Catalina como «vos, la menor»). Por otro lado, afirmó que destruía sus cartas una vez las había respondido —«A las demás cartas vuestras, por ser ya viejas, acuerdo de no responder, sino quemarlas, por no cargar más de papeles»—, lo que puede parecer insensible porque muchos padres ausentes habrían conservado estos preciados recuerdos de sus hijos.[426] Pero sus cartas están llenas de cariño y aun de amor. En marzo de 1582, escribió: «Debéis de haber crecido mucho, a lo menos la menor [Catalina]. Si tenéis medida, avisadme cuánto habréis crecido después que no os vi y enviadme vuestras medidas muy bien tomadas en cintas, y también la de vuestro hermano, que holgaré de verlas, aunque más holgaré de veros a todos». Obviamente, las infantas debieron de cumplir los deseos de su padre enviándole un retrato, porque, poco después, repitió: «¡A todos os querría ver más que en retratos!». Dos años después, confesaría: «Me hallo muy solo en el carro sin vosotras».[427]

Cuando se separó de Catalina en 1585, al rey no le salían las palabras —«de vos ni del duque no pude despedirme como quisiera ni deciros algunas cosas que pensaba»—, por lo que subió a la torre de una iglesia cercana a fin de ver por última vez alejarse su galera. Pero de nuevo volvió a llevarse una decepción: «Se veía mucha mar, mas ya no estabais en el golfo». De modo que se dispuso a escribir sus pensamientos más

íntimos en una carta que envió, junto con otra de Isabel, «con orden que procurase alcanzaros en Rosas». Una vez más, para su desilusión, el correo no pudo alcanzar la galera y trajo de vuelta las cartas. Pasada una semana, el rey volvió a escribir «porque veáis que no nos descuidamos de escribiros y la soledad con que quedamos de vos; y la misma tenemos ahora».[428] Se puso contentísimo cuando recibió «la primera carta vuestra que me escribisteis» al llegar Catalina a Saboya, en la que esta le comunicaba que la travesía había sido rápida y segura. «Yo bien creo que Dios lo hizo así por lo que vos lo merecéis», escribió, añadiendo a continuación con inesperada pasión: «No sé si lo mucho que yo os quiero me lo hace parecer así, y ¡yo creo que hemos de competir el duque y yo sobre quién os quiere más!». Luego, comentaba pormenorizadamente cada una de las tres cartas de Catalina que habían llegado casi a la vez, antes de suspirar, «acá no podemos dejar, vuestra hermana y yo, de acordarnos siempre de vos y tener mucha soledad vuestra». En junio de 1588, a pesar de su preocupación con otros asuntos —incluida la Empresa de Inglaterra—, reveló que había estado contando los días desde la marcha de Catalina: «Ayer hizo tres años que os embarcasteis, y que no os veo, que no me ha dado ahora poca soledad, y sé que con razón la puedo tener de vos, por lo que me queréis y yo os quiero».[429]

De vez en cuando, el rey también dejaba escapar cuánto echaba de menos a «vuestras dos madres», es decir, Isabel de Valois, a quien ellas no podían recordar, y Ana de Austria, que las había criado. Así, en 1582, en la víspera del segundo aniversario de la muerte de Ana, aunque «es muy tarde y estoy cansado», en una conmovedora posdata que sabía que las niñas comprenderían, añadía: «Y bien me acordaré yo de esta noche, aunque viviese mil años». Al aniversario siguiente, Ana volvía a estar presente en sus pensamientos durante una visita que hizo solo al Bosque de Segovia. «Dios sabe la soledad que yo siento»,

se lamentaba a sus hijas, «y más en este día».[430]

El rey podía ser sorprendentemente bromista en sus cartas. En una, describió con detalle cuánto había disfrutado de un viaje de ida y vuelta por el Tajo hasta Belén, en Lisboa, «viendo los navíos que hay ahora en este río […]. Cierto estaba para ver e hizo muy buen día y el río muy sosegado. Digo esto», proseguía (y es fácil imaginarle sonriendo mientras escribía), «por vengarme de la envidia que os he tenido a la ida a El Pardo y a San Lorenzo». Poco antes, había bromeado con sus hijas fingiendo que no podía recordar las edades de sus hijos menores:

> Acá han escrito que a vuestro hermano chico [Felipe] le había salido un diente: paréceme que tardaba mucho, para tener ya tres años, que hoy los cumple que se bautizó, como se os acordará; y estoy en duda si son dos a tres, y creo que debe estar lindo como decís. También estoy en duda cuántos cumple el [hermano] mayor en julio, aunque crea que son seis. Avisadme lo cierto de ello.[431]

Naturalmente, el rey sabía perfectamente las edades de sus hijos (en efecto, Diego tenía seis años y Felipe, tres), pero, como la mayoría de los padres cuando quieren animar a sus hijos adolescentes a que les escriban, pensaba sin duda que este fingimiento de ignorancia daría resultado.

De vez en cuando, el rey regañaba a sus hijas, por ejemplo, cuando se enteraba de que se habían portado mal («bien será que entrambas tengáis mucho cuidado de hacer lo que en esto y en todo os dijere» su camarera mayor) o cuando sus cartas contenían errores («vos la mayor, [escribió] que vuestro hermano cobró mucha fama [de ballestero] y creo lo decís por vuestra hermana, y es así, según lo que decía adelante, sino que por la "a" pusisteis "o"; y otra palabra se os olvidó. Creo que debisteis escribir la carta aprisa», ¡una reprimenda apabullante para una niña de quince años que echaba desesperadamente de menos a su padre! Pero, normalmente, las cubría de elogios. Se sintió encantado cuando las infantas animaron al joven Diego a

bailar, y el rey estudió con placer su carta y «una pintura de un caballo que me parece está mejor que solía» hecha por el príncipe. Le envió a su hijo algunas letras del alfabeto para colorear, y le anunció que tenía más para mandarle cuando lo necesitara.[432]

Pero aquello no ocurriría nunca: Diego murió de viruela a la edad de siete años; fue el tercer príncipe heredero fallecido en vida de Felipe. «Es un golpe terrible», escribió, «viniendo tan pronto como viene después de todos los demás; pero alabo a Dios por todo lo que ha hecho, sometiéndome a su divina voluntad y rezando para que le agrade este sacrificio».[433] La muerte de Diego también forzó un cambio de los planes regios. Felipe llevaba tiempo deseando regresar de Portugal a Castilla para pasar la Navidad de 1582 con su familia; pero tuvo que esperar hasta que las Cortes portuguesas pudieran reunirse y prestar juramento a su último hijo superviviente, Felipe, como su heredero.

Cuando hubo conseguido esto, el rey partió de Lisboa y, en marzo de 1583, llegó de nuevo a El Escorial. Después de un oficio religioso, «visitó Su Magestad el aposento de la reina», lo cual debió resultarle un momento amargo, y luego «subió al cimborio de la iglesia» y visitó todas las partes que se habían construido desde su marcha. También recibió San Lorenzo el cuerpecillo de María, la más pequeña de los hijos de Ana, lo que también «afligió harto con el amor paternal al rey don Felipe, sintiéndola como padre, de suerte que le hizo cessar de atender a otras cosas el sentimiento della». La enterró junto a sus otros cinco hijos que yacían ya «en la bóveda que está debajo del altar mayor».[434]

¿Una quinta esposa para el rey?

En medio de tantas desgracias, la llegada de la emperatriz viuda María con su hija menor, la archiduquesa Margarita, dio

ánimos de nuevo a la familia real. Después de una odisea que les hizo atravesar gran parte de Europa, entraron en Madrid en marzo de 1582 y, tras un breve descanso con las infantas, María y Margarita partieron para reunirse con el rey en Portugal. Felipe no pudo disimular su entusiasmo ante su llegada. Escribió a sus hijas para preguntarles si María «viene gorda o flaca, y si nos parecemos agora algo como creo que solíamos, y bien creo que no estará tan vieja como yo». Felipe salió en un carruaje para reunirse con su hermana cerca de la raya de Castilla y, a pesar de que «llovía mucho […], salí del carro a prisa y la fui a besar las manos antes que pudiese salir del suyo» (esta es una de las pocas veces en que Felipe parece haber actuado «a prisa»). Luego viajaron juntos en el mismo coche y, como escribió a sus hijas, «lo que ella y yo holgaríamos de vernos, lo podréis pensar, habiendo veintiséis años que no nos habíamos visto; y aun en treinta cuatro años solas dos veces nos hemos visto y bien pocos días en ellos».[435]

El rey también «holgaría» de ver a su jovencita sobrina, la archiduquesa Margarita. La muerte del príncipe Diego llevó a los ministros en Madrid a presionar a Felipe para que volviera a casarse, y los pensamientos del rey —que había cumplido cincuenta y cinco años— se centraron en Margarita, nacida en 1567. La emperatriz quedó horrorizada debido a «lo que antes tenía determinado: que era meter monja a su hija la infanta doña Margarita en el monasterio de las Descalzas», como le había comunicado a Hans Khevenhüller, el embajador imperial. Khevenhüller recordó diplomáticamente a la emperatriz que «no debía precipitarse en cosa que después no se podía mudar», añadiendo: «Esto no ha mouido de su parezer solo sino de grauíssimos theólogos» (como otras veces, evidentemente Felipe había preparado el terreno asegurándose de que los pareceres de los teólogos fueran favorables a sus planes). Así pues, «estando las cosas en punto que el rey don

Felipe desseaua cassarse con la serenísima infanta», María «no podía meterla monja con buena consciencia». Por otra parte, señalaba Khevenhüller, «su magestad del rey don Felipe gustaua de semejantes mugeres y no quería en perjuicio de su familia y cassa traer muger estrangera», es decir, que Felipe solo se casaría con otro miembro de la Casa de Austria, y Margarita era en aquel momento la única disponible.[436]

La presión se intensificó hasta el punto de que Margarita se vio obligada a escribir un extraordinario «papel» a su tío. En él, empezaba afirmando que, dado que «todos están de parte de Vuestra Magestad y nadie se declara por la mía, me e valido de Dios, encomendándole este negocio». Según decía, había dos motivos para «hallarme impossibilitada para casarme»: el primero, «por auer echo voto de religiosa, y dado palabra a Dios de ser esposa suya». Así, inquiría retóricamente: «Dígame Vuestra Magestad si, auiendo yo dado palabra al Rey del Cielo de ser su esposa, será bien no cunplirla por casarme con un rey de la tierra». Margarita concluía con una segunda consideración, cuidadosamente pensada para apelar a la visión providencial de Felipe. Dado todo lo que el rey había hecho por Dios, sostenía Margarita, sin duda Él le respondería dándole «larga vida, prósperos sucessos, y conservándole la sucessión de hijos, que le ha dado». Además,

> aunque el príncipe, Dios le guarde, aora en su tierna edad se crie tan achacoso y con poca salud, yo tomaré a mi cargo el encomendarle a Dios. Y esté cierto Vuestra Magestad de una cosa: que si Vuestra Magestad se sirve de dejarle a Dios a su esposa, y su Margarita, y no rompiendo vínculos tan estrechos, Él también se servirá de dar al príncipe entera salud, entrando más en la edad, y casándosse, tener larga sucessión.[437]

Este chantaje providencialista era digno del propio Felipe, a pesar de que durante algún tiempo el pretendiente rechazado, «auiendo sentido la resolución de que la infanta doña Margarita se auía de vestir el hábito de descalza francisca, con todas las diligencias posibles procuró impedirlo totalmente o a lo menos

dilitarlo». Pero en el otoño de 1584 el rey aceptó por fin su derrota, asistiendo con sus hijas a una sencilla ceremonia en el oratorio de las Descalzas en la que, al parecer, lloró al ver a Margarita cortarse el cabello cuando la emperatriz «le vistió el hábito de monja».[438]

Khevenhüller al fin respiró aliviado. «Su magestad», le dijo a María, «con su prudencia, ni se auía de casar con la serenísima infanta ni con otra alguna, porque según el parezer de los médicos podía vivir su magestad algunos años más si no se cassaua; y cassándose no le dauan vn año de vida. Y por este camino (dize) perderemos a nuestro rey y señor». Obviamente, el embajador preveía que las exigencias físicas de otra novia adolescente podían dejar agotado a su anciano tío de cincuenta y ocho años.[439] De modo que Margarita permaneció en las Descalzas de monja hasta su muerte, acaecida casi cincuenta años más tarde, sin duda observando con satisfacción cómo su sobrino Felipe crecía, era coronado rey —como Felipe III—, contraía matrimonio y engendraba cinco hijos sanos [véase lámina 33].

Aunque vivía en su aposento de las Descalzas Reales, la emperatriz María se mantenía en constante contacto con su hermano. Algunas veces iba a reunirse con él a El Escorial o a Aranjuez, y otras él la visitaba en las Descalzas. En otras ocasiones, los dos hermanos utilizaban al embajador Khevenhüller como intermediario: este afirmaba que, desde que volvieron a Madrid procedentes de Lisboa, la emperatriz se implicó tanto no solo en los «negocios de fuera de los reynos sino también los más íntimos y domésticos» que, «cada día, dos o tres vezes, era fuerza yr [Khevenhüller] a consultar a su magestad sobre ellos, traiendo y lleuando recados desde las Descalzas a donde estaua su magestad del rey don Felipe».[440] Por otra parte, el aposento de María en las Descalzas sirvió de refugio a los hijos de Felipe (los menores de los cuales, claro está, eran también nietos suyos); y, tras la muerte de su

hermano, les ayudó a reponerse. Por ejemplo, en octubre de 1598, el recién coronado Felipe III la visitaba cada día, mientras que la infanta Isabel vivió con su tía y con Margarita durante ocho meses, hasta que se casó con el hijo de María, Alberto *(véase capítulo 19)*.

Muerte y descargos

El rey tenía también una red de parientes ilegítimos, y, aunque conocía personalmente a muy pocos de ellos, en ocasiones intervino en sus vidas de manera decisiva. Todos llevaban el tratamiento «de Aragón» (los descendientes ilegítimos de su bisabuelo, Fernando el Católico) o bien «de Austria» (los descendientes ilegítimos de su bisabuelo Maximiliano y de su padre Carlos). Entre los primeros destacaron don Hernando de Aragón, arzobispo de Zaragoza, y que sirvió a Felipe como virrey de Aragón hasta su muerte en 1575, y don Francisco de Borja y Aragón, consejero íntimo de Felipe y de su hermana Juana hasta su muerte en 1572. Los cuatro eran bisnietos del rey Fernando. Entre los demás, Felipe se interesaba por «el señor Maximiliano de Austria», hijo ilegítimo de Leopoldo de Austria (obispo de Córdoba y uno de los doce hijos ilegítimos del emperador Maximiliano). Felipe nombró a Maximiliano abad de Alcalá la Real de Jaén y, más tarde, obispo de Cádiz.

Carlos V había engendrado a dos hijas ilegítimas, ambas nacidas en 1522. Felipe desconoció la existencia de la primera, doña Tadea de la Penna, hasta 1560, cuando llegó a su mesa una carta en que su medio hermana, ahora monja en Roma, le enteraba de quién era su padre y se quejaba de que «muchos señores y religiosos aquí lo saben (contra mi voluntad)». Pidió a Felipe que reconociera «que soy hija, aunque indignísima, de aquella feliz y santa memoria del emperador Carlos V, que sea en gloria», y le diera una pensión en Roma o bien la trasladara a España.[441] Aunque no sabemos cómo respondió Felipe a esta

carta, parece probable que dejara a su medio hermana en su convento.

La segunda medio hermana era Margarita de Austria, nacida en los Países Bajos y criada por su tía María de Hungría. Esta seguía una carrera muy distinta. Carlos la había reconocido como su hija y la había casado con el duque de Parma. Margarita pasó las dos décadas siguientes en Italia y, de preferencia, siempre escribía en italiano, incluso al rey. Se unió a Felipe en Flandes e Inglaterra y permaneció con él hasta la salida del rey para España dos años más tarde. Aunque Felipe y Margarita nunca se vieron más, cambiaban muchas cartas, especialmente cuando Margarita servía como gobernadora de los Países Bajos. Alejandro, el hijo de Margarita, luchó bajo el mando de don Juan, su medio tío, primero en la flota mediterránea y después en Flandes, donde le sucedió como gobernador en 1578. El rey siempre le demostró cariño. Tras la muerte de sus padres en 1586, el rey escribió una cálida nota de condolencia a su medio sobrino: «Es menester que lo llevéys christiana y constantemente», escribió, y que «miréys por vuestra salud», añadiendo de su propio puño y letra: «Si os han faltado vuestros padres dentro de tan pocos días, aquí os quedo yo en su lugar». Tampoco vio más a su medio sobrino: Alejandro murió en los Países Bajos en 1592.[442]

Al principio Felipe también mostró cariño por el otro hijo de Carlos V, «el señor don Juan mi hermano». En 1559 le entregó el collar del Toisón de Oro y le proporcionó su propia casa *(véase capítulo 7)*; en 1568 le nombró capitán general de su flota mediterránea, y después, de su ejército en la guerra de Granada. En 1570 dio su consentimiento cuando el papa le nombró comandante de la Santa Liga contra los turcos. Aunque don Juan desobedeció a su medio hermano mayor por primera vez en 1565, cuando huyó de la corte para participar en el socorro de Malta, tres años más tarde reveló a Felipe los

planes de su sobrino don Carlos de huir a Alemania *(véase capítulo 10)*. Las relaciones entre ambos solo empeoraron más tarde.

Es difícil apreciar la trayectoria meteórica de don Juan. Hasta 1559, cuando tenía doce años, solamente cuatro o cinco personas conocían su identidad, y, durante una década más, solo tuvo renombre en la corte de España; pero su victoria aplastante en Lepanto, cuando tenía veinticuatro años, le convirtió en un mito internacional y también en un centro de influencia en la corte. Apoyado por sus partidarios, don Juan soñó entonces con ser rey —primero de Túnez y luego de Inglaterra—, pero Felipe se mostraba contrario e insistía en que su hermano ejecutara sus metas imperiales. Don Juan rehusó en varias ocasiones: en 1575, aunque Felipe le había mandado permanecer en Lombardía, cuando se enteró de que la flota otomana amenazaba Túnez, salió enseguida a la cabeza de sus galeras para darles batalla. Al año siguiente, a pesar de las órdenes reales de pasar directamente de Nápoles a Flandes, permaneció seis semanas en Lombardía y entonces viajó a Madrid en lugar de a Bruselas. Cuando llegó a los Países Bajos, hizo todo lo posible por salir, primero para encabezar una invasión a Inglaterra, y luego para volver a la corte de España. Por fin, el rey se enfadó tanto con estos desafíos de su medio hermano que, en octubre de 1578, decidió revocar su comisión. Solo la muerte permitió que Felipe se reconciliara con él: mandó enterrarle en El Escorial, cerca de su padre, siendo el único miembro ilegítimo de la Casa de Austria que fue honrado de esta manera.

Felipe mostró la misma ambigüedad hacia las dos hijas de su hermano. Don Juan concibió a la primera, Ana, con doña María de Mendoza, pariente de los condes de La Coruña y de la princesa de Éboli, en cuyo palacio en Pastrana nació la niña en 1568. Poco después de la muerte de María en 1572, Ana

entró en un convento; y en 1578, poco después de la muerte de su padre, Felipe le concedía los mismos privilegios disfrutados por otras religiosas de la Casa Real, incluido el derecho a utilizar el tratamiento «de Austria». Ana lo perdió todo en 1594, cuando la convencieron de que un «hombre que se llamava Gabriel de Espinosa» era realmente «el mismo rey don Sebastián» de Portugal, que había escapado milagrosamente de la muerte tras su derrota en África. Ella comenzó a llamarle «Señor» e hizo planes para casarse con él, tras lo cual ambos viajarían a Lisboa para reclamar su derecho como reyes de Portugal. Después de una prolongada investigación, Felipe ordenó la ejecución de Espinosa y del resto de sus cómplices en el engaño, así como el confinamiento de Ana en estricta clausura en otro convento, donde permaneció hasta la muerte del rey [véase lámina 34].[443]

Felipe también intervino directamente en la crianza de la otra hija dejada por su hermano: doña Juana de Austria, concebida con una aristócrata napolitana en 1573. Don Juan envió a la niña con su medio hermana, Margarita, y cuando don Juan murió, Margarita pidió a Felipe que trasladara a Juana a España «para la criar cerca de la reina, a quien hubiera dado contentamiento». Pero el rey «ha querido tomar otra resolución, pareciéndole mejor depositarla en el monasterio de Santa Clara de Nápoles […] con la intención de que, cuando tenga la edad, la tomara la devoción para quedar como religiosa». Cuando la orden real llegó a Nápoles, el virrey, don Juan de Zúñiga, se quejó a su amo de que «tengo por mucho mejor la criança en Spaña» porque «no aviendo quedado otra prenda del señor don Juan, es muy justo que Vuestra Magestad la favorezca y haga mucha merced» —¡un testimonio sorprendente de cómo la existencia de Ana de Austria era desconocida aun entre los ministros reales de máxima confianza!—, pero Felipe insistió.[444] Diez años más tarde, un

sobrino de Sixto V expresó el deseo de casarse con Juana, y Felipe —viendo en esto un camino para complacer al papa— lo aprobó; pero con la muerte de Sixto terminó la negociación. En marzo de 1598 intervino de nuevo cuando el duque de Urbino, un importante aliado de España, quiso casarse con Juana. Felipe ya había concedido a esta una pensión de 3.600 ducados y «le reconoce por su sobrina», pero insistió en que su dote «le cueste muy poco» porque «es parte de la reputación que la tomen con poco dote». Este matrimonio tampoco se cumplió, y cuando el rey murió, Juana aún permanecía en el convento de Santa Clara de Nápoles.[445]

Felipe, por último, tenía otra obligación familiar: pagar las deudas de su padre y de otros parientes. El Archivo General de Simancas conserva cincuenta y dos enormes legajos titulados «Descargos de Carlos V», llenos de desesperadas peticiones de antiguos sirvientes del emperador solicitando el pago de atrasos salariales o reembolsos de gastos incurridos al servicio de la Casa de Austria. Aunque en julio de 1559 el rey destinó ochenta mil ducados a los testamentarios del emperador para el pago de sus deudas, pronto se descubrió que Carlos debía mucho más, y no solo a sus servidores, sino también a los acreedores de sus propios padres y sus abuelos, «por hauérsele, después que fue jurado por rey destos reinos de la corona de Castilla y Aragón, ofresçido grandes guerras y gastos forçosos». En febrero de 1579, una junta de ministros nombrados para supervisar los descargos de Carlos V pidió a Felipe que dotara «alguna cantidad» para saldar los pagos de los acreedores de sus familiares difuntos. El rey dictó una desdeñosa respuesta: «Por cierto que holgaría yo mucho de que esto se pudiesse luego cumplir, pero son muchas las cosas que se offrescen, y poco lo que ay para acudir a ellas; y assí se podría esto acordar más adelante». Además, rogó «si ay bienes suyos de que se pudiesse cumplir lo que no lo estuviere de sus testamentos». Tal vez, al

releer esta respuesta, el rey se dio cuenta de lo despiadada que sonaba, porque añadió de su puño y letra: «Digo que adelante se me avise lo que parecería que podría bastar para cada año para ir cumpliendo lo que aquí se dice».[446]

El rey fue igualmente desdeñoso a la hora de saldar las deudas y cumplir la voluntad de otro pariente próximo: su hijo don Carlos, muerto en 1568. Se apropió calladamente de algunas de las posesiones más valiosas del difunto príncipe para evitar que fueran a parar a la almoneda, pero sin pagar una suma adecuada para liquidar sus deudas. Aun en 1576, todavía no se había separado de un «crucifijo de oro con su corona» y un calvario «que Pompeo León, mi escultor, hizo para el dicho príncipe», quien lo había legado al convento de Nuestra Señora de Atocha.[447] Este comportamiento extraordinario reflejaba perfectamente la compleja relación entre Felipe y su malogrado hijo mayor.

10. El enigma de don Carlos

El episodio dramático más famoso (o infame) de la vida de Felipe II ocurrió justo antes de la medianoche del 18 de enero de 1568, cuando el rey dirigió a algunos cortesanos de confianza a través de los oscuros corredores del Alcázar de Madrid para arrestar y encarcelar a su hijo, el príncipe heredero don Carlos. Seis meses después, mientras todavía se encontraba en prisión, el príncipe murió —según el embajador inglés, John Man— «no sin gran sospecha de bocado», es decir, envenenado por orden de su padre.[448]

De esta triste historia se han publicado cientos de versiones, empezando por dos breves tratados que aparecieron en los Países Bajos en 1581. El primero y más conocido, la polémica *Apología* de Guillermo de Orange, afirmaba que Felipe «había asesinado de forma desnaturalizada a su propio hijo y heredero». El segundo tratado, *Diógenes*, una petición al rey de Francia para que apoyara la lucha de los flamencos contra la «tiranía» de Felipe, redactada en verso, era mucho más corto que la *Apología*, pero planteaba una acusación que se mantendría vigente durante mucho tiempo: que don Carlos se había enamorado de su madrastra, Isabel de Valois, y por ello Felipe había asesinado a ambos al enterarse de ello.[449] Estas acusaciones volvieron a aparecer en la novela histórica *Don Carlos* de César de Saint-Réal (1672), en la pieza teatral *Don Karlos* de Friedrich Schiller (1787), así como en la ópera de Giuseppe Verdi *Don Carlo* (representada por primera vez en 1867). La mayor parte de estas versiones se apoyaba en fuentes indirectas (de hecho, a menudo, en las mismas). Así, el libreto de Verdi estaba basado en la obra de Schiller, que a su vez lo estaba en la de Saint-Réal, el cual incorporaba las alegaciones de la *Apología* de Orange y del *Diógenes*.

Los hechos del 18 de enero de 1568

Todo eso ocurriría en el futuro. En 1568, Francisco Pereira, el embajador portugués y tío de Ruy Gómez, fue la primera persona ajena al asunto en enterarse de los dramáticos hechos que siguieron —«a dos horas después de medianoche [del 18] fue avisado de lo que passaba»— y también el primero en escribir una historia sobre ello. Afirmaba que el rey pasó las navidades de 1567 con los monjes y algunos cortesanos en San Lorenzo de El Escorial, y regresó al Alcázar de Madrid la noche del 16 de enero de 1568. El domingo 17, el rey fue a la capilla acompañado de don Carlos. Pasó el 18 de enero «en la cama, diciendo que estaba mal dispuesto. Así quedó todo el día». En un momento dado, seguía Pereira, Felipe convocó a cuatro de sus principales consejeros, incluido Ruy Gómez, y cuando todos estuvieron reunidos,

> les dijo que las cosas del príncipe anduvieron de manera tan mal ordenadas que era necesario acudir a ellas por lo que debía a ser su padre y cristiano, y a bien de estos reinos; y que los llamaba no para que le dieran sus pareceres en eso, porque estaba resoluto a lo que había de hacer, sino para le acompañaran y harán lo que él les mandase.

Para entonces, el rey había compartido su plan con otras seis personas: los dos gentilhombres de cámara del príncipe que estaban de servicio aquella noche, quienes recibieron órdenes de dejar la puerta de su aposento abierta, apagar todas las luces y sacar de allí todas las armas y a todos los guardias que el príncipe solía tener consigo; otros dos cortesanos para que estuvieran apercibidos; así como dos ayudas de cámara, armados con martillos y clavos.

A las once de la noche Felipe se puso su armadura y yelmo, y guio a su pequeño séquito «sin antorcha ni vela al aposento del príncipe, que estaba en la cama», y «le tomó luego la espada que tenía a la cabecera y un arcabuz cargado [es decir, con su carga de pólvora y bala preparada para ser disparada de

inmediato] que siempre tenía cerca». Al despertarse y hallarse rodeado de hombres armados, don Carlos exclamó alarmado: «¿Qué quiere Vuestra Magestad? ¿Qué hora es esta? ¿Quiéreme Vuestra Magestad matar o prender?». «Ni lo uno ni lo otro, príncipe», respondió Felipe, y ordenó a los ayudas de cámara que cerraran las ventanas con clavos. En ese momento, el príncipe «saltó fuera de la cama y hizo demostración de querer echarse en el fuego»; cuando un cortesano le sujetó, gritó: «¿Vuestra Magestad me quiere atar como loco? Yo no soy loco, mas desesperado». «Con su ordinaria flema», Felipe respondió: «Sossegaos príncipe: entrad en la cama porque lo que se haze es por vuestro bien y remedio». El rey entonces «le tomó todos sus papeles que tenía en sus escritorios», junto con 30.000 escudos en monedas que encontró en la cámara de su hijo, y salió, dejando a los dos gentilhombres de la cámara en la habitación de su hijo mientras el resto del grupo aguardaba fuera.[450]

Estos dramáticos sucesos provocaron un gran revuelo. Al día siguiente, Pereira señaló que está «toda esta tierra espantada y fuera de juizio»; una semana más tarde, un ministro del rey todavía juzgaba el suceso como «totalmente inesperado y de lo más insólito».[451] A un embajador italiano le parecía, sin embargo, que el arresto «no ha sido tomado al caso ni en furia, pero ha sido bien preparado», mientras que su colega francés recordaba que

> el día 13 de este mes, el rey ordenó a las iglesias y monasterios de esta ciudad que rezaran, a todas las horas canónicas y en todas las misas, pidiendo a Dios que le inspiraran y guiaran en cierta deliberación y plan que tenía pensado. Esto dio mucho que hablar a todos los chismosos [«*speculatifs*»] de la corte, pero nunca pensé que se refiriera al príncipe.[452]

Esta sabiduría retrospectiva pasa por alto una circunstancia importante: si, en efecto, Felipe tenía decidido ya el destino de su hijo, parece de una hipocresía asombrosa que fuera con él a misa el domingo antes del arresto, transmitiendo de este modo a don Carlos una falsa sensación de seguridad. Cabe

preguntarse por qué, si su decisión la había tomado en El Escorial el 13 de enero, el rey esperó cinco días enteros para actuar.

Explicaciones

El cuerpo diplomático tampoco entendía exactamente las razones de Felipe. «Qué será la verdadera causa, no sé», admitía el embajador toscano, quien añadía que «muchos aseguran que Su Majestad dará cuenta de todo no solo a sus reinos, pero a todos los príncipes cristianos». Tenía razón. Felipe pasó gran parte del 19 de enero haciendo exactamente eso: convocando reuniones separadamente con los consejos de Castilla, Aragón, Italia, Indias y Órdenes, en las que explicaba a cada uno que había actuado «por causas que convinieron a su servicio y al bien de estos reinos, las quales les diría a su tiempo». También escribió o dictó cartas que explicaban sus acciones a sus vasallos y a sus aliados.[453] Todas las cartas de Felipe hacían hincapié en que había arrestado al príncipe solo por causa de su «natural y particular condición» y no «por offensa ni culpa que contra nuestra persona aya cometido, ni por otra cosa de semejante especie». En cada caso prometía proporcionar más detalles a su debido tiempo (según una de las fuentes, «el rey decía que daría cuarenta causas y razones que le habían obligado a llevar a cabo dicho arresto»), y, entre tanto, prohibía cualquier comentario más sobre el tema, incluso en los sermones.[454]

En aquel momento, Felipe solo proporcionó más detalles a la reina Catalina de Portugal, ya que, como única hermana superviviente de Carlos V, era el miembro de más edad de su familia, y, además, como madre de María Manuela, su primera esposa, era también abuela de don Carlos. En una larga carta ológrafa que empezó a escribirle el 20 de enero, Felipe le recordaba en primer lugar que él ya la había avisado «del discurso de vida y modo de proceder del prínçipe mi hijo», así

como de los «muchos y grandes argumentos y testimonios» que demostraban «la neçessidad precisa que havía de poner en su persona remedio». Su «amor de padre», continuaba, «me ha detenido, buscando y usando de todos los otros medios y remedios y caminos que para no llegar a este punto me han parescido necessarios». Pero ahora

> las cosas del prínçipe han passado tan adelante y venido a tal estado que para cumplir con la obligación que tengo a Dios, como prínçipe christiano, y a los reynos y estados que ha sido servido de poner a mi cargo, no he podido escusar de hazer mudança de su persona y recogerle y encerralle.

Felipe también revelaba a Catalina (y, en este momento, parece que solo a ella) que el arresto no sería una medida provisional:

> A Vuestra Alteza solo me ha paresçido agora advertir que el fundamento desta mía determinación no depende de culpa, ni inobediencia, ni desacato, ni es endereçada a castigo, que aunque para ello havía sufficiente materia, pudiera tener su tiempo y su término. Ni tanpoco lo he tomado por medio, teniendo esperança que por este camino se reformarán sus exçessos y desórdenes. Tiene este negoçio otro principio y raíz, cuyo remedio, no consiste en tiempo, ni en medios.[455]

Mientras tanto, Felipe licenció a los servidores de su hijo y trasladó a este a una torre del Alcázar de Madrid, en un aposento sin ventana que medía «30 pies en cuadra», aproximadamente el mismo tamaño que tenía el que ocupó Bartolomé de Carranza después de su arresto (hecho que algunos consideraron como un mal presagio). Seis cortesanos de confianza mantuvieron al príncipe bajo estricta vigilancia noche y día, asegurándose de que nadie entraba o salía de su aposento. A principios de febrero, el embajador alemán notó que «todo el mundo guarda silencio sobre el príncipe, como si estuviera muerto»; y dos meses después, su colega toscano se hacía eco de lo mismo, afirmando, «del príncipe de España no se haze más cuenta, como si nunca fuera nacido en el mundo, y su vida et custodia sigue en la misma manera que el primer día, sin esperanza que puede hablar ni una palabra».[456]

No es de extrañar que estas medidas tan drásticas, unidas a la negativa de Felipe a ofrecer una explicación detallada de lo sucedido, dieran lugar a las más diversas reacciones. Catalina de Portugal propuso visitar al príncipe, su nieto, en persona para «gobernarle como madre», y Felipe tuvo que enviar a un mensajero especial a Lisboa para disuadirla.[457] Desde Viena, María y Maximiliano protestaron ante Felipe por la falta de una explicación convincente, especialmente después de recibir la noticia de que don Carlos había tomado la comunión de Pascua de Resurrección, lo que sugería que volvía a estar «normal». De mala gana, Felipe se sentó a su mesa para «abrirles mi pecho para satisfazer a Vuestras Altezas como lo requiere nuestra hermandad, que con ninguno otro yo no tengo para que declararme, siendo negocios de tal qualidad, y de padre a hijo»; y escribió el único análisis que ha llegado hasta nosotros de sus pensamientos más íntimos sobre «la naturaleza» y «los defectos» de su hijo. Empezaba con la comunión pascual del príncipe. Explicaba que, al principio, «ni yo ni las personas que assisten al príncipe estávamos satisfechos de que él huviese disposición» de comulgar; pero «paresciendo a su confesor que era más pío y sano consejo administrárselos, se le remitió, y assí se le administraron». Felipe admitía que todo había ido bien durante la misa, pero, continuaba diciendo,

> consideran Vuestras Altezas que esta es materia que tiene tiempos, en algunos de los quales ay más serenidad que en otros; y que assimismo es diferente cosa el tratar destos defectos en respecto de lo que toca al govierno y acciones públicas, o en quanto a los actos y cosas personales y de la vida particular, que puede muy bien estar que para lo uno sea uno enteramente defectuoso, y en lo otro se pueda passar y permitir.

Así pues, concluía Felipe tristemente, «no contradize este acto particular [la comunión] al defecto de su entendimiento que por mis peccados ha permitido nuestro señor que huviesse en mi hijo».[458]

«El defecto de su entendimiento»

El esfuerzo de Felipe de «abrirles mi pecho» a sus «hermanos» revelaba un encomiable realismo en su valoración de la «naturaleza» de su hijo, pero no de sus causas. Esto no debería sorprendernos: aún hoy, el historial médico del príncipe continúa siendo un enigma. Don Carlos nació después de un parto difícil que duró tres días, lo que sin duda le privó de oxígeno en momentos cruciales, y quizá causó una hemiparesia derecha; su lenguaje expresivo sufrió un retraso, con dificultades de pronunciación y ritmo, y su voz era muy aguda. Después, pasó lo que hoy se llamaría una infancia llena de carencias. Hijo único, su madre no sobrevivió a su nacimiento más que cuatro días, en 1545, y su padre se marchó al extranjero de 1548 a 1551. Además, a los once meses de edad, perdió también a su nodriza, lo que provocó «un intenso, continuo e inconsolable llanto, cólera y negativismo a ser alimentado»; y a los siete años se le separó bruscamente tanto de su tía Juana como de su aya, doña Leonor de Mascarenhas, quienes habían vigilado al príncipe y con las que tenía relaciones de afecto. Cuando su padre salió para Inglaterra en 1554, don Carlos quedó prácticamente huérfano. Como escribió el psiquiatra Prudencio Rodríguez Ramos, «don Carlos tuvo una infancia complicada tanto emocional como físicamente», lo que de ordinario produce «una personalidad compleja y narcisista»:

> Los niños con pérdidas afectivas similares tienden a buscar afectos de forma vehemente e indiscriminada, y manifestar sus emociones descontroladamente. Así era descrito don Carlos en su infancia y juventud, ávido de afecto y fidelidad ante cualquier persona, extremado en amores y odios, y explosivo en sus reacciones ante la menor frustración.[459]

El príncipe también tenía otro problema debido a la consanguinidad favorecida por la Casa de Austria: sus genes. En lugar de ocho bisabuelos, don Carlos solo tenía cuatro, y en lugar de dieciséis tatarabuelos, solo tenía seis. Este hecho no explicaba por sí solo los efectos de la endogamia en don Carlos.

Muchos de sus antepasados borgoñones y Trastámara también se habían casado entre sí. María de Borgoña, por ejemplo, contaba con solo seis bisabuelos en lugar de ocho; mientras que su hijo Felipe I se casó con su prima tercera Juana, hija de los primos Fernando e Isabel, ellos mismos descendientes de matrimonios frecuentes entre los Trastámara, diseñados para unir toda la península ibérica bajo el mismo cetro. Estos matrimonios entre parientes desembocaron en un coeficiente de consanguinidad para Carlos V de 0,037, pero las uniones tanto de Carlos como de Felipe con primas hermanas por partida doble multiplicaron enormemente el coeficiente de consanguinidad de don Carlos hasta el 0,211, casi el mismo nivel que se encontraría en los hijos de un matrimonio entre un padre y una hija o entre un hermano y una hermana (0,25).

Aunque estas uniones incestuosas produjeron un vasto imperio, como se pretendía, también generaron una descendencia con defectos notables: no solo mala salud, baja estatura, deformaciones físicas y debilidad general, sino también relativa esterilidad. La consanguinidad puede explicar por qué, aunque Felipe engendró unos quince hijos con sus cuatro esposas, solo cuatro sobrevivieron a la niñez. La endogamia ya había acarreado problemas serios a las familias reales de la península ibérica. La reina Juana, abuela tanto de Felipe como de María Manuela, vivió confinada en Tordesillas desde 1506 hasta su muerte en 1555, siendo su comportamiento tan anormal que hasta su propia progenie temía que fuera una bruja o una hereje. La abuela de Juana, Isabel de Portugal, también había sido encerrada, terminando sus días, en 1496, prisionera y demente en el castillo de Arévalo. Así pues, don Carlos no solo contaba con una herencia genética notablemente corta, sino que esta además incluía por lo menos dos casos de inestabilidad mental.

Sin embargo, Felipe, que pasó bastante tiempo con su hijo

durante su estancia en España entre 1551 y 1554, no pareció albergar dudas sobre la capacidad de don Carlos para sucederle. En su testamento de 1557 le nombró su «heredero universal» y decretó que gobernaría los Países Bajos así como España y sus territorios de ultramar tras su muerte, si bien bajo la tutela de regentes hasta que alcanzara la edad de veinte años. En 1559, recordando tal vez el humillante régimen que su propio padre le había impuesto tras su matrimonio *(véase capítulo 1)*, Felipe firmó un codicilo por el que se relajaba esta restricción: la regencia finalizaría y don Carlos gobernaría y reinaría tan pronto «sea casado y velado, aunque no tenga la dicha hedad [de veinte años]».[460] [⇒] [⇒]

Pero don Carlos ya sufría problemas físicos. Tenía hombros desiguales, la pierna izquierda más corta que la derecha y músculos débiles; además, tenía fama de ser impotente. Sufría también de «cuartanas» (probablemente malaria) que periódicamente le dejaban incapacitado. En 1561, después de un agudo brote de cuartana, quedó «tan flaco y fatigado que ha parecido a mis médicos que debría mudar de aires», y Felipe decidió enviar a su hijo, junto con don Juan de Austria y Alejandro Farnesio, a Alcalá de Henares, donde no solo podrían disfrutar de un clima saludable, sino también adquirir la educación universitaria de la que el propio rey carecía.[461]

Al principio, todo fue bien, y el príncipe tomó en serio sus estudios. Pero el 19 de abril de 1562, tal vez debido a la diferente longitud de sus piernas, don Carlos tropezó cuando bajaba por unas escaleras y se cayó, golpeándose fuertemente contra una puerta e hiriéndose de gravedad en la cabeza. Al principio, solo se sintió aturdido y pudo hablar con sus médicos mientras le vendaban la herida y le sangraban; pero, pasados diez días, tal vez debido a la falta de esterilización del vendaje, la herida empezó a supurar y don Carlos desarrolló una fiebre. La infección se extendió por su sistema linfático, desde la

cabeza (los abscesos le obligaban a tener cerrados los ojos) al cuello y el pecho. Empezó a delirar.

Felipe visitó a su hijo poco después del accidente, pero regresó a Madrid una vez que su recuperación parecía asegurada. Ahora se apresuró de nuevo a acudir a Alcalá, y en el palacio del arzobispo de Toledo, el malogrado Carranza, mantuvo catorce largas consultas con los médicos. También ordenó oraciones y procesiones por todo el reino para rogar por la salud de don Carlos, y él mismo rezó junto al lecho de su hijo. A pesar de todo esto, el 9 de mayo los galenos dieron al príncipe apenas cuatro horas de vida. El confesor del rey, fray Bernardo de Fresneda, un franciscano, sugirió entonces una línea de acción alternativa: «Puesto que Su Alteza está tan enfermo y ya no quedan más esperanzas en un remedio terrenal, hay que buscar una cura proveniente del cielo». En concreto, Fresneda propuso llevar a la cama del príncipe los restos mortales de fray Diego de Alcalá, un franciscano fallecido casi un siglo antes y que gozaba de una gran reputación en la localidad como hacedor de milagros. A pesar de las dudas, el rey dio las órdenes necesarias para que el sarcófago fuese abierto y se colocaran los restos del fraile junto al príncipe, quien los tocó antes de perder el conocimiento.[462]

Felipe, incapaz de ver morir a su único hijo, volvió a caballo a Madrid, donde permaneció rezando en San Jerónimo mientras esperaba la llegada de la inevitable noticia. Esa misma noche, el príncipe empezó a recuperarse. Una semana después, los médicos pudieron por fin limpiar los abscesos que habían tenido cerrados los ojos del príncipe y sacaron un fragmento de hueso necrosado de la herida de la cabeza. La fiebre remitió.

Felipe, rebosante de alegría, celebró la curación repartiendo limosnas, perdonando a los condenados a prisión por delitos de deudas y tomando parte en una procesión especial antes de

asistir a un sermón en el que se pidió la canonización de Diego de Alcalá a la vista de este evidente milagro. El 16 de junio, casi dos meses después de la caída, don Carlos consiguió ponerse en pie y abrazar a su padre, y al día siguiente recibió en audiencia a un grupo de embajadores que acudieron a felicitarle por su recuperación. Aunque encontró cortés al príncipe, el embajador veneciano notó que era «muy pálido y de debilísima fuerza. Es de estatura muy pequeña y mucho menor que lo que se espera, dado su edad de diecisiete años». Cuando tres semanas más tarde sus médicos le pesaron, comprobaron que el príncipe «pesó en calzas y en jubón, con una ropilla de damasco, tres arrobas y una libra», es decir, algo menos de treinta y cinco kilogramos.[463]

Felipe reanudó entonces sus esfuerzos para allanarle a su hijo el camino de la sucesión. En 1563 viajó a Aragón e hizo todo lo posible para que las Cortes prestaran juramento de lealtad a don Carlos a pesar de que «por su indispusición y flaqueza yo estoy resuelto de no traerle por esta vez». Incluso afirmó que las Cortes podían romper con la tradición y tomar juramento al príncipe ausente «que toca al bien del reyno, y ojalá esto se hiziese, que yo daría por bien empleado no llevar servicio en toda my vida», una oferta extraordinaria (y una simpleza a la vez, pues Felipe vivió treinta y cinco años más, mientras que don Carlos murió cinco años después de ese acto), que revela plenamente cómo el rey continuaba confiando en su hijo.[464]

El príncipe parecía albergar dos personalidades (o, como su padre expresaría más tarde a Maximiliano y María, «tiene tiempos, en algunos de los quales ay más serenidad que en otros»). En 1564 el barón Adam von Dietrichstein llegó a España como nuevo embajador imperial, y su primera misión consistió en ultimar el matrimonio de don Carlos con la archiduquesa Ana. Al encontrarse con una actitud evasiva del

rey respecto al asunto, empezó a preguntar a sus contactos españoles sobre la naturaleza del príncipe. La información que reunió fue «*schlecht genueg*» [bastante mal]: aparte de sus deformidades físicas y mala salud, el príncipe mostraba unos inquietantes cambios de humor. Aunque «en muchos aspectos el príncipe demuestra una clara comprensión», informaba Dietrichstein, «en cambio en otros sigue siendo tan infantil como un niño de siete años. Todo lo quiere saber y todo lo pregunta, pero sin ningún propósito ni sentido de la medida». Por otra parte, «su razonamiento no parece lo suficientemente desarrollado para permitirle distinguir lo bueno de lo malo, lo superfluo de lo importante, lo posible de lo imposible».[465]

Pero Dietrichstein modificó un tanto sus puntos de vista cuando conoció personalmente al príncipe. Aunque le pareció que el cuerpo de don Carlos era, en efecto, deforme y que hablaba con cierta dificultad, sobre todo confundiendo los sonidos «r» y «l», el embajador señaló que siempre conseguía hacerse entender. Dietrichstein notó también que el príncipe «tiene un temperamento impulsivo y violento, y que a menudo pierde los estribos; dice cualquier cosa que se le pasa por la cabeza, libremente y sin tino, sin pararse a pensar a quién puede ofender», aunque consideraba exageradas algunas de las otras opiniones negativas que había oído sobre él:

> Ha hablado conmigo varias veces y, haciéndome, según su costumbre, muchas preguntas; pero lejos de encontrarlas irrelevantes, como me habían dicho que a menudo es el caso, todas me parecieron muy sensatas. Tiene una memoria excelente […]. Es profundamente religioso, muy amigo de la justicia y de la verdad; odia las mentiras y no perdona a quien alguna vez las haya dicho.[466]

Padre frente a hijo

Felipe II, como muchos otros padres de niños con daños cerebrales, parecía sentir una mezcla de culpa y de negación, de impotencia y de ira, cuando se enfrentaba a las impredecibles mudanzas de humor de su hijo. En 1564, justo dos años

después de experimentar la gran alegría que le produjo la recuperación de Carlos, el rey se lamentaba al duque de Alba de la falta de fortaleza moral y física «que en la persona de Su Alteza hay, así en juicio y ser, como en el entendimiento, que queda muy atrás de lo que en su edad se requiere»; y, en respuesta a la insistencia por parte de su embajador Dietrichstein para ultimar los preparativos de boda con Ana, el rey le recordó a María y Maximiliano que «aunque mi hijo tiene ya XIX años, que aunque otros mozos hacen tarde, Dios es servido que el mío pase tan adelante a los otros todos como esto».[467]

¿En qué momento decidió Felipe que don Carlos ni podía ni debía sucederle en el trono? Dos semanas después del arresto del príncipe, Ruy Gómez comunicó al embajador francés que «hace más de tres años que el rey se dio cuenta plenamente de que el cerebro del príncipe estaba aún más deformado que su cuerpo» —un comentario cruel e indigno— «y de que nunca alcanzaría el buen criterio necesario»; pero que «su Majestad ha disimulado durante mucho tiempo esta convicción en la esperanza de que su sabiduría y discreción aumentara con la edad; sin embargo ha ocurrido justo lo contrario, ya que cada día va a peor». Es decir, la desconfianza regia comenzó en 1565.[468] Y, en verdad, a partir de entonces, las críticas al comportamiento de don Carlos se multiplicaron. En su relación al Senado veneciano a principios de 1565, Giovanni Soranzo afirmaba que «el príncipe ni escucha ni respeta a nadie» y «de natura es muy cruel». Tenía «costumbres extraordinarias», que a nadie agradaban, «y en todo lo que hace muestra orgullo y arrogancia». Un año más tarde, el prior don Antonio de Toledo —quien, como caballerizo mayor del rey, conocía bien a don Carlos— opinaba que «el príncipe va cada día de mal en peor, y no de salud, sino de mal que tiene menos remedio».[469]

En abril de 1567, el embajador Fourquevaux comentó que el rey tenía «poca confianza en la capacidad y adecuación del príncipe, su hijo, para gobernar y heredar tantos Estados», pero dos meses después, el mismo Fourquevaux anunció que «de momento el príncipe es un buen hijo y está consiguiendo de su padre todo lo que quiere: los consejos de Estado y de Guerra se reúnen en sus aposentos y él manda completamente en los asuntos de Estado y quiere que se le obedezca sin discusión». La documentación del gobierno le da la razón. Por ejemplo, en abril de 1567, cuando llegó una carta en la que su embajador en Alemania advertía de que los rebeldes flamencos podían estar reclutando tropas alemanas, Felipe garabateó: «Decid a Ruy Gómez que diga al príncipe que mande tener luego consejo de Estado en su presencia, donde se vean estas cartas y lo que se deve de responder a ellas, y principalmente a este punto». En septiembre, al recibirse otro paquete de Alemania, Felipe volvió a comunicar a su secretario: «Esta se podrá ver en consejo con el príncipe». El rey hacía lo mismo con los despachos procedentes de los Países Bajos. En primavera de ese mismo año, el secretario Antonio Pérez informó a Felipe de que «parece que esta tarde aya consejo de [E]stado con su alteza y los flamencos, aunque dize Ruy Gómez que avrá de ser tarde, porque su alteza está reposando agora y lo estará hasta las cuatro; pero quedó a su cargo que, en pudiendo juntarse el consejo, que lo haría avisar a todos y para esto sabría de su alteza luego la hora». El rey se mostró de acuerdo.[470]

Fray Bernardo de Fresneda, confesor real y promotor de la intervención de los huesos de fray Diego de Alcalá cuando don Carlos parecía cerca de la muerte, ofrecía una curiosa explicación sobre la decisión del rey de introducir a su hijo en los asuntos de Estado. Poco después del arresto del príncipe, el embajador veneciano pidió directamente al confesor real que le dijese «unas particularidades de esta materia», y Fresneda

replicó:

> Se ha tolerado sus bofetadas, para ver si con el tiempo se va a mejorar, y han hecho diversas pruebas para ver si las cosas extravagantes que hacía procedían de furia juvenil, o de un apetito de dominar, o por falta de juicio. Para dicho efecto, el rey le ha permitido presidir en los consejos; le ha dado autoridad de mandar en muchas cosas; y se ha ordenado que le diera siempre grandes sumas de dinero.

Fresneda concluía que esta estrategia «ha probado que cuando el [príncipe] entraba en Consejo, ponía confusión en todo, y impedimento en cada deliberación». Por otra parte, «la autoridad recibida del Rey usaba [don Carlos] por el contrario, para sus maldades».[471]

Hubo varios tipos de «maldades». En diciembre de 1566, cuando Felipe presenció la apertura de las Cortes de Castilla en el Alcázar de Madrid, llevó consigo al príncipe, quien se sentó junto a su padre mientras un secretario leía el discurso real ante la asamblea, solicitando fondos para costear, entre otras cosas, su regreso a los Países Bajos. La comitiva real se retiró y las Cortes empezaron a debatir no solo sobre cómo financiar el viaje del rey, sino también sobre los preparativos de la regencia que habría de producirse durante su ausencia. Muchos procuradores se mostraron partidarios de que don Carlos se quedara, como había hecho Felipe durante las ausencias de su padre. Pero esto no era en absoluto lo que el príncipe deseaba oír, de modo que don Carlos entró de nuevo en la sala donde se reunían las Cortes y amenazó con que «quienquiera que recomendara que él se quedara en España, se convertiría, junto con la ciudad a la que representaba, en su peor enemigo». También anunció que «estaba decidido a ir dondequiera que fuera su Majestad, y que nadie en el mundo podría detenerle». A continuación, abandonó furioso la asamblea.[472] ¿Por qué?

Don Carlos sabía que Maximiliano y María tenían pensado reunirse con Felipe en Bruselas, llevando con ellos a su hija Ana, con la que él se iba a casar, y el príncipe estaba

entusiasmado con este matrimonio. Tenía un retrato de la princesa puesto «en una caja redonda de ébano con una moldura de plata sobredorada», con el cual «se huelga muy mucho». También se interesaba mucho por las cosas del Sacro Imperio Romano. A partir de julio de 1566 empezó a pagar un salario a «Luis de Morisote que enseñava a su Alteza la lengua alemana», y compró libros alemanes entre los que había «un *Libro del Caballero Tuerdanque*» en alemán.[473] Ana hablaba español con fluidez, así que don Carlos no necesitaba aprender alemán para charlar con ella; pero tal vez la compra de un ejemplar de *Theuerdank* aclaraba sus planes: ese poema épico, donde el emperador Maximiliano I narraba sus peripecias para casarse con María de Borgoña, ofrecía un ejemplo importante para su bisnieto.

Sus «maldades» eran cada vez más frecuentes. En una ocasión, don Carlos arrojó por una ventana a un paje cuya conducta le molestó; en otra, «Su Alteza se disgustó y enojó mucho» con Juan Estévez de Lobón, su «guarda joyas y ropa»,

> por un billete que le faltó, y en tanta manera que le quiso echar por una ventana, y algunos de los caballeros de su cámara vio que le detuvieron; y así Su Alteza mandó despedir al dicho Lobón, y que se fuese a su casa, llamándole bellaco, ladrón y que había cometido *crimen lesae majestatis*.[474]

Otra «maldad» se descubrió la noche del arresto. Felipe localizó en el aposento de su hijo más de 30.000 escudos en oro, y también correspondencia que revelaba que estaba tratando desesperadamente de reunir mucho más: en el momento de su arresto, el príncipe adeudaba más de 200.000 ducados en concepto de préstamos solicitados a diversos banqueros. Unas cartas fechadas el 1 de diciembre de 1567 y firmadas «Yo el príncipe» ordenaban a su ayuda de cámara que reuniera 600.000 ducados en Sevilla, «con el secreto y decencia que ser pueda», para «cumplir lo que tengo ordenado» en «una necesidad forçosa y urgentíssima».[475]

¿Traición y complot?

¿Qué era esta necesidad que costaba tanto? Ni siquiera los contadores de la Real Hacienda pudieron averiguarlo cuando en 1572 revisaron las cuentas del fallecido príncipe, porque dejó algunas partidas deliberadamente ambiguas. Por ejemplo, dos pagos de más de 1.000 ducados cada uno «que en postrero de abril del dicho año 1567 dio y entregó a Su Alteza para dar a cierta persona secreta», mientras que un contador escribió desesperado junto a las veintinueve partidas prestadas al príncipe por el banquero Antonio Fúcar: «No se sabe por qué razón fuese».[476]

El embajador de Mantua, Emilio Roberti, fue el único contemporáneo que pareció haber adivinado el secreto de la «necesidad» del príncipe: «Su Alteza escribió a los Grandes invitándoles a quererle acompañar en una jornada, que se ha descubierto era de pasar con las galeras en Italia, y presentarse ante el Emperador para celebrar el matrimonio suyo».[477] Es decir, sabiendo que el emperador todavía quería que se casara con Ana, don Carlos había concluido que su única posibilidad de hacerlo era seguir el ejemplo de su tatarabuelo Maximiliano en *Theuerdank* e ir a buscar a su prometida en persona. Pero el éxito del plan de don Carlos dependía por completo de la cooperación de don Juan de Austria, nombrado capitán general de la mar el 15 de enero de 1568, pues era él quien mandaba las galeras necesarias para llevarle a Italia.

Al parecer, en una reunión mantenida el 16 de enero, el príncipe comunicó su plan a don Juan, indicándole que estaba listo para salir de la corte «la noche siguiente» y suplicándole su ayuda. Este le pidió veinticuatro horas para pensarlo, e inmediatamente salió para informar al rey. Según varios observadores, el príncipe se dio cuenta enseguida de esta «traición» y, después de cargar y amartillar un arcabuz, invitó a

don Juan a volver a su aposento, con la intención de matarle. Un gentilhombre de la cámara descargó el arma, por lo que don Carlos no pudo usarla cuando su tío llegó. Entonces sacó su daga. Don Juan, que era mucho más fuerte, le apartó de un empujón gritando «¡Qué Vuestra Alteza no dé un paso más!», alboroto que atrajo la atención de varios asistentes, los cuales acudieron a toda prisa para comprobar qué sucedía. Don Juan consiguió arrebatarle la daga al príncipe y se la llevó al rey como prueba. Parece que la noticia de esta agresión fue lo que impulsó a Felipe a actuar de inmediato. Como escribió el embajador Roberti, «el rey, que ya estaba en grave pensamiento por esto que el príncipe andaba suscitando, juzgó que no se puede más disimular».[478]

Cabe suponer que los documentos incautados por Felipe en el aposento del príncipe revelaron todos sus planes, porque, como comentó Fourquevaux, «el dicho príncipe escribe de su puño y letra todo lo que piensa, por lo que él mismo descubrió las diez mil o más ideas absurdas o descabelladas que tiene en la cabeza». Ciertamente, el rey no perdió tiempo y comenzó a leer el archivo de su hijo: al día siguiente, Pereira escribió que, «después de comer hasta bien noche», Felipe estuvo «viendo los papeles del príncipe».[479] Aunque ninguna misiva escrita por don Carlos sobre su plan ha sobrevivido, el Archivo General de Simancas guarda un legajo de cartas dirigidas al príncipe durante su último año de libertad que resultan bastante reveladoras. En primer lugar, el heredero había recibido cartas de destacadas personas de todos los reinos y territorios de la monarquía, en las que manifestaban su gran interés por complacerle. Desde Milán, Pedro de Ibarra informaba a don Carlos de «lo que pasa por el servicio de Su Magestad»; desde Génova, el embajador don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa le transmitía noticias sobre la flota otomana; y desde Nueva España, el virrey enviaba al príncipe, como regalo, «tres tigres».

Aunque estas comunicaciones parecían inocuas, otras no lo eran. Desde Laredo, Luis Ortiz compartía con el príncipe sus motivos personales de queja, porque el rey «no me haze oýr en justicia»; mientras que, desde Granada, el presidente de la Chancillería, Pedro de Deza, anunciaba que había intervenido para asegurar el juicio rápido de alguien que contaba con el favor del príncipe. En el caso de que el contenido de estas cartas a su hijo no hubiera resultado lo suficientemente perturbador para Felipe, lo que sin duda no pudo dejar de sorprenderle fue el desmesurado lenguaje utilizado por los corresponsales del príncipe: «Nuestro Señor guarde la muy alta y muy poderosa persona de Vuestra Alteza con acrescentamiento de mayores reynos y señoríos como yo, menor vasallo de Vuestra Alteza, deseo», así como la manera en que en ellas se despedían «de Vuestra Alteza, muy fiel criado que sus reales manos besa». Tan aduladoras fórmulas, sin paralelo en los archivos de la monarquía, aparecen en cartas de tantos corresponsales distintos que solo pueden obedecer a una directriz del príncipe o de algún miembro de su séquito.[480]

Ese séquito reunía numerosos jóvenes de talento que más adelante alcanzaron gran relevancia: don Cristóbal de Moura y don Juan de Idiáquez, que se convertirían en los consejeros de más confianza de Felipe durante los últimos quince años de su reinado, y don Juan de Silva y don Juan de Borja, los cuales desempeñarían (al igual que Moura) un papel clave en la unión de Portugal y Castilla. Los cuatro formaban parte de un grupo de cortesanos conocido como «la Academia», que se congregaba alrededor del duque de Alba e, inicialmente, se reunía en su aposento. Poco a poco, el lugar de reunión favorito de «la Academia» empezó a ser la «alcobilla» del aposento de don Carlos en el Alcázar de Madrid. El grupo debatía no solo sobre mujeres, poesía, guerra y caballería, sino también sobre «cómo se sustenta la privanza» y «cómo negociar en corte». Muchos

servían en la Casa del Príncipe, y es probable que el propio don Carlos asistiera a algunas de sus juntas.

Aunque no existen pruebas de que ningún miembro de este grupo fuera desleal a Felipe, si el rey hubiera muerto en cualquier momento antes de la noche del 18 de enero de 1568, los miembros de la Academia de Alba se habrían hecho inmediatamente con el control del gobierno central. Aunque puede ser que el historiador Gil González Dávila exagerara cuando más adelante escribió que don Carlos sufría de «una enfermedad no nueva: un desseo de reynar antes de tiempo», el príncipe y su Casa representaban sin duda el interés reversionario dentro de la monarquía. Si Felipe moría, sus ministros —y, especialmente, los implicados en el arresto— se enfrentarían a la caída en desgracia, si no a la muerte. El nuncio papal fue quien mejor expresó este dilema, justo dos semanas después del arresto: «Se tiene por cierto que van a privar el príncipe de la sucesión, y no le pondrán en libertad nunca. El príncipe odia a muerte a los ministros más favorecidos por el rey; y cuando este [don Carlos] vendría a reinar, ellos y toda su sucesión serían arruinados». Así pues, el nuncio predijo que Ruy Gómez, Feria, Espinosa y los demás «le harán proceso» al príncipe para conseguir que nunca «vendría a reinar». Un destacado ministro flamenco en Madrid estaba de acuerdo: pocos días después del arresto, le dijo a un colega que los principales ministros del rey «intentaban conseguir una declaración de inhabilitación e incapacidad para la sucesión al trono». Asimismo, Fourquevaux creía que «habrá un juicio formal del príncipe de España para declararle incapacitado para la sucesión».[481]

Aunque no existe ninguna prueba fiable de que don Carlos fuera sometido a un «juicio formal», en su *Historia general del mundo del tiempo del señor rey don Felipe II, el Prudente*, escrita en la década de 1590, Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas afirmó

que la opción recibía consideración. «Dezía en la corte que el rey quería hazer processo, y con el consejo declarar al príncipe por inhábil para la succesión de la corona, y toda tardança parecía peligrosa», pero «no se hallando que el príncipe uviesse maquinado alguna cosa contra el padre, ni tenido opiniones diferentes de la fe, ni pensamiento dello, antes dio siempre muestras de príncipe muy católico y verdadero hijo de la Yglesia».[482] Al carecer de fundamentos incontrovertibles para declararle «inhábil», el rey, al parecer, decidió mantener a su hijo encerrado hasta su muerte, como Carlos V había hecho con la reina Juana, a quien las Cortes de Castilla habían jurado lealtad como reina propietaria.

El prisionero

El encarcelamiento perpetuo fue, al parecer, la opción que Felipe consideraba más conveniente. Tengamos en cuenta que, solo dos días después del arresto, había informado a la abuela del príncipe, Catalina de Portugal, que don Carlos jamás saldría de prisión, y, al poco tiempo, reveló esta decisión a otros. En abril, le recordaba al duque de Alba, quien le había pedido más orientación sobre el asunto, que

> no encerré [al príncipe] para poner fin al desorden de su conducta o reformar su carácter, pues este medio de enmienda fracasaría como todos los anteriores. Por consiguiente, resulta de un modo bien claro que mi objeto consiste en poner remedio definitivo a los males que podrían venir durante el resto de mi vida, y sobre todo, después de mi muerte. Y ansí, como la causa de que procede la puede mal curar el tiempo, la resolución de que esta depende no la tiene.

Poco después, Felipe se lo expresó a Maximiliano con todavía más claridad: «Lo que se ha hecho no es temporal, ni para que en ello adelante haya de haver mudanza alguna».[483]

El rey había despersonalizado a su hijo, convirtiéndole en un problema puramente administrativo. Ahora, ya no le quedaba más que asegurarse de que don Carlos, al igual que su abuela Juana en su momento, permaneciese a buen recaudo y

recibiera suficiente comida y bebida. Pereira escribió a finales de febrero que el príncipe había comido poco durante la semana anterior y nada en los últimos cuatro días, y que cuando su confesor no consiguió convencerle, sus guardianes «entraron con él con un hierro en la mano con cierto ingenio para le abrir la boca», y de esta manera le forzaron a comer un poco de sopa y carne.[484] El príncipe continuó sin alimentarse, tal vez con la esperanza de morir, y en una ocasión se tragó un diamante, con el propósito de suicidarse, pero sus médicos le administraron purgas hasta que el diamante volvió a aparecer. Al final, según el conde de Lerma, su custodio, el príncipe había estado «sin comer para matarse quince días», pero entonces:

> Persuadido de su confesor y del médico, quiso comer y deseó vivir; y no vbo lugar lo vno ni lo otro, porque se abían çerrado de manera las bías por donde comemos, que no podía pasar apenas vn poco de caldo […] [pero] bebía cada día quatro o cinco açunbres [ocho o diez litros] de agua con niebe, que bastaba a matar mil onbres de azero [un síntoma probable de malaria]. En fin, le dijeron que no podía bibir, y entendido esto, se confesó y rrecibió todos los sacramentos y extrema vnción con gran dolor y contrición de sus pecados, y de esta manera bibió tres días, haziendo gran demostraçión de cristiano, y pidiendo a bozes a Dios misericordia y a su padre perdón y la bendición.[485]

No lo consiguió. Según Fourquevaux, las erráticas costumbres del príncipe mientras estuvo en prisión «enfurecían a su padre, porque, si él muere, el mundo hablará de ello de muy diversas maneras. Si vive, tengo entendido que lo trasladarán al castillo de Arévalo» (una elección interesante, dado que la tatarabuela del príncipe, Isabel de Portugal, había estado encarcelada allí).[486] En lugar de visitar a su hijo, en abril el rey salió de Madrid para Aranjuez, y en julio se trasladó a El Escorial, desde donde hizo una excursión al Bosque de Segovia, y únicamente regresó a la capital cuando le llegó la noticia de que don Carlos había muerto. Felipe se recluyó entonces en un monasterio y ordenó a sus súbditos «que hagáis la demostración de lutos y otras cosas que en semejante caso se acostumbra y

suele hacer» en memoria del «serenísimo príncipe don Carlos, mi muy caro y muy amado hijo».[487] Cuando Felipe comenzó a reunir cuerpos reales en El Escorial, el de su difunto hijo fue el primero en llegar (junto con el de Isabel de Valois). Ordenó que Pompeo Leoni utilizara el atractivo retrato del príncipe con armadura, realizado en 1567, como modelo para la enorme estatua del cenotafio situado junto al altar mayor de la basílica de El Escorial, donde, entre todos los hijos del rey, él es el único que mira por encima del hombro de su padre, junto a su madre y sus dos madrastras [véase lámina 22]. La decisión de incluir a don Carlos, y así perpetuar el recuerdo del heredero en quien el rey había depositado tantos deseos y esperanzas en vano, supuso un desembolso para Felipe de unos 13.000 ducados, una inversión más que considerable.

Como Fourquevaux comentó con cierta malicia, «su muerte ha resuelto varios problemas a los que se enfrentaba el Rey Católico», que conocían aquellos que habían estado cerca del rey y de su hijo. Su custodio respiró aliviado al informar del fallecimiento de su prisionero a un pariente:

> Fue la mayor [misericordia] que se puede encarezer aberle dado tan buena muerte, estando tan lejos de merezella, y gran merced que hizo a toda la cristiandad en llebarle al çielo. Porque, çierto, si bibiera, fuera la destruición de toda ella: que su condición y costumbres eran fuera de toda orden. Él está muy bien allá y todos los que le conoçimos alabamos a Dios por ello.

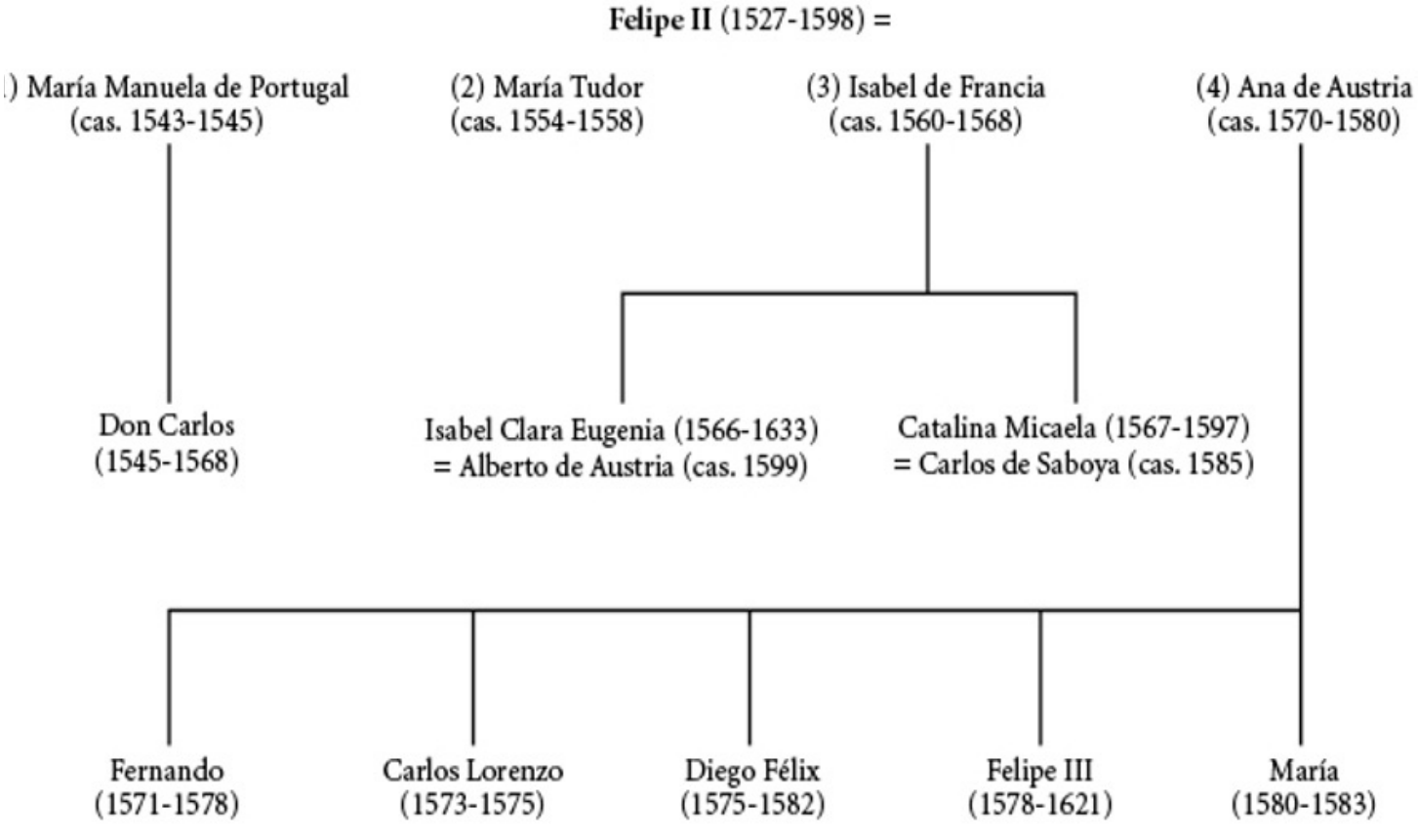
Un agente del duque de Alba en la corte también se alegró con la noticia, «porque, según su manera de proceder», si el príncipe hubiera seguido vivo «pudiera meter en riesgo […] la quietud destos reinos, y especialmente si saliera de donde estaba». Don Juan de Zúñiga, que como gentilhombre de la boca de Felipe había visto al príncipe con regularidad hasta el momento de su arresto, estaba completamente de acuerdo. «Lo que todos sabemos de la naturaleza de la condición del príncipe», escribió a otro cortesano, había llevado a que «yo la temí de manera que, contra el parecer de todos mis amigos,

rehusé de servirle» y, continuaba, «cuando vi que vuestra merced hacía lo mismo» —esto es, declinar la invitación de servir a don Carlos—, «me confirmo más en que lo acertaba».[488] Incluso la reina, Isabel de Valois, insinuaba su locura en una emotiva carta a Fourquevaux escrita la mañana siguiente al arresto del príncipe: «Dios ha querido hacer pública su verdadera naturaleza». El propio embajador había expresado incredulidad ante la insistencia de Maximiliano en presionar para que se llevara a cabo el matrimonio con Ana: «El emperador afirma que él no sabe —o no quiere saber— la causa real del encarcelamiento del príncipe, es decir, la clara incapacidad y falta de sentido común del pobre joven».[489]

Cuatro siglos y medio después, resulta difícil resolver el enigma de don Carlos. Algunas cartas que han llegado hasta nosotros, escritas cuando el príncipe tenía veintidós años, evidencian un estilo epistolar más propio de un niño de once [véase lámina 35]. Cuesta imaginar que alguien con tal dificultad para escribir pudiese gobernar un imperio en el que nunca se ponía el sol, y ese era su destino, porque, aunque su padre encontrara inconvenientes para hacer valer sus derechos al trono portugués en 1580, nadie discutía que don Carlos era el presunto heredero al trono de su primo Sebastián. Pero, por supuesto, aquí radica uno de los problemas: la endogamia que había situado al príncipe en el primer puesto en la línea de sucesión también había generado una constitución física y mental débil.

La explicación que dio Felipe para las drásticas medidas que tomó el 18 de enero de 1568 —que actuó «[ni] por offensa ni culpa que contra nuestra persona aya cometido, ni por otra cosa de semejante especie»— no era, por tanto, completamente cierta. El intento del príncipe de asesinar a don Juan parece haber servido de desencadenante. No obstante, la causa subyacente radicaba en la «natural y particular condición» del príncipe. Como la mayoría de los cortesanos y el cuerpo

diplomático reconoció, Felipe no tenía más alternativa que poner a su hijo bajo custodia permanente, como Carlos V había hecho con la reina Juana. La desgracia de Felipe consistió en el hecho de que sus contemporáneos no estaban mejor preparados para comprender tanto los defectos genéticos como las heridas traumáticas en la cabeza, por lo que muchos de ellos dieron crédito a las afirmaciones infundadas de John Man, Guillermo de Orange y el autor anónimo del *Diógenes*.


Felipe II (1527-1598) =
) María Manuela de Portugal
(cas. 1543-1545)
(2) María Tudor
(cas. 1554-1558)
(3) Isabel de Francia
(cas. 1560-1568)
(4) Ana de Austria
(cas. 1570-1580)
Don Carlos
(1545-1568)
Isabel Clara Eugenia (1566-1633)
= Alberto de Austria (cas. 1599)
Catalina Micaela (1567-1597)
= Carlos de Saboya (cas. 1585)
Fernando
(1571-1578)
Carlos Lorenzo
(1573-1575)
Diego Félix
(1575-1582)
Felipe III
(1578-1621)
María
(1580-1583)

La familia de Felipe II. Aunque el rey contrajo matrimonio en cuatro ocasiones, y a pesar de que tres de sus esposas tuvieron hijos que alcanzaron la vida adulta, solo dos de ellos, Catalina Micaela y su hermanastro Felipe, llegaron a ser padres a su vez. El futuro Felipe III fue el cuarto hijo del rey que recibió el título de príncipe de Asturias, tras la muerte de su hermanastro Carlos (1568) y sus hermanos Fernando (1578) y Diego Félix (1582).

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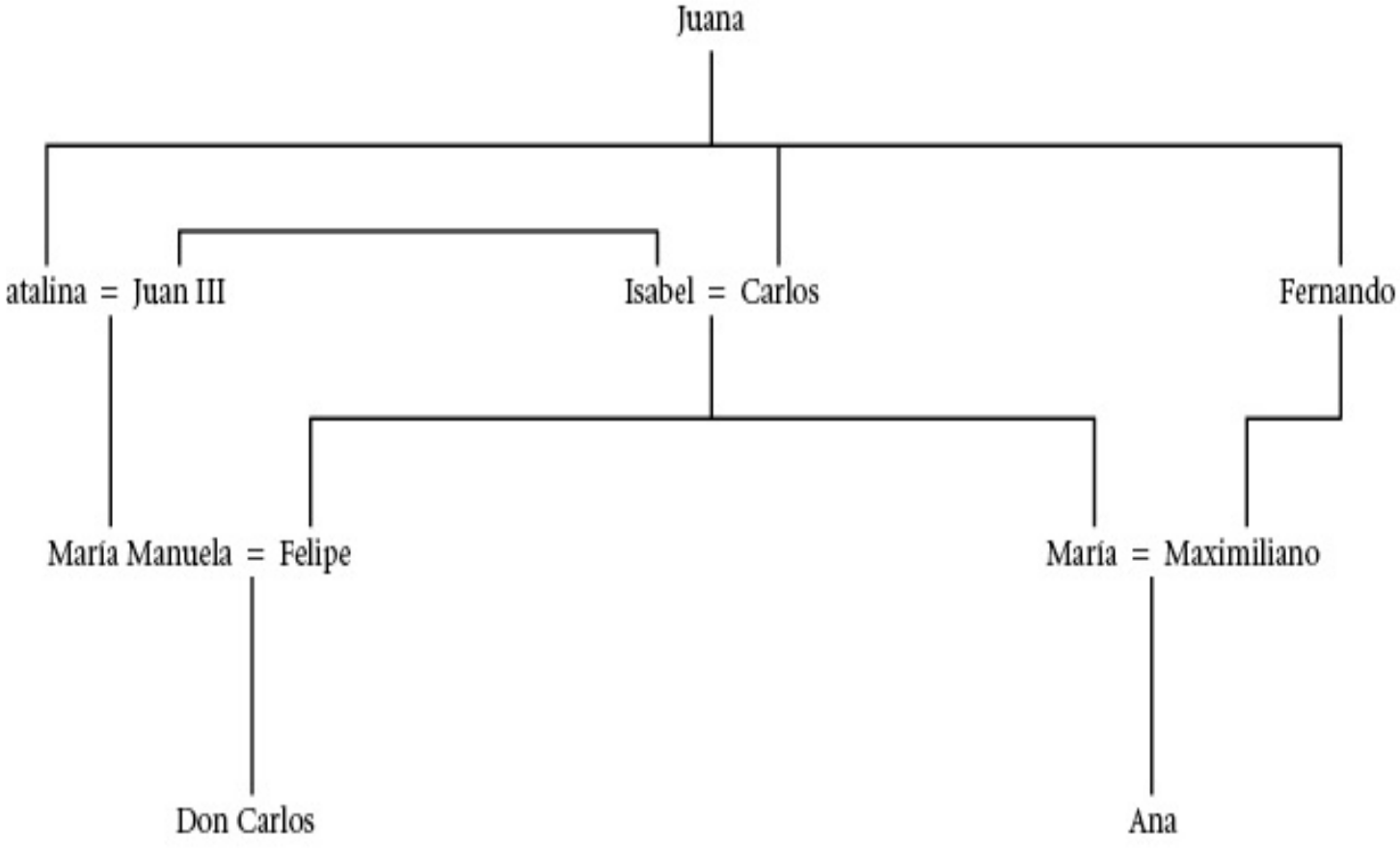
Juana
atalina = Juan III
Isabel = Carlos
Fernando
María Manuela = Felipe
María = Maximiliano
Don Carlos
Ana

Don Carlos y sus antepasados. Don Carlos era bisnieto de Juana la Loca por parte de madre y de padre, lo que incrementaba los riesgos de inestabilidad mental en su línea genealógica. Además, en lugar de ocho bisabuelos, tan solo tenía cuatro. El matrimonio con su prima Ana, enormemente deseado tanto por él como por los padres de ella, habría concentrado aún más la carga genética.

<<

sposa	Embarazos	Abortos	Muertos edad 0-2	Muertos edad 3-10	Superaron la infancia	Sobrevivieron a Felipe
laría Manuela	1	0	0	0	1	0
laría Tudor	¿2?	¿2?	0	0	0	0
abel de Francia	5	2	1	0	2	1
na de Austria	7	1	2	2	1	1
otal	15	5	3	2	4	2

La limitada fertilidad de Felipe II. Tanto la familia real española como la portuguesa buscaron unir la península ibérica bajo un mismo cetro y, para conseguirlo, sus miembros se casaron entre ellos generación tras generación. Aunque esta endogamia logró finalmente el objetivo deseado —en 1580 Felipe subió al trono portugués—, la carga genética de la dinastía aumentó al tiempo que se reducía su fertilidad. Tan solo cuatro de los quince hijos engendrados por Felipe llegaron a la vida adulta y, de ellos, únicamente dos tuvieron descendencia.

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CUARTA PARTE

El rey vencedor

11. Años de cruzada, 1568-1572

Para Felipe II, 1568 fue un *annus horribilis*. Aparte de la tragedia de don Carlos y la muerte de Isabel de Valois, sus desafectos súbditos en los Países Bajos consiguieron apoyo extranjero para una invasión que costaría una fortuna derrotar. También, a finales de año, se rebelaron los moriscos de Granada. Frente a tantos reveses, el cardenal Diego de Espinosa, principal asesor de Felipe, escribió a su amo: «Dame tanta tristeza y pone me tanto desmayo ver a Vuestra Magestad enfadado y con congoxa de lo que le dizen […] y así suplico a Vuestra Magestad de rodillas no se fatigue tanto». En un extraordinario rescripto, el rey expresaba su deseo de abdicar:

> Son cosas estas que no pueden dexar de dar mucha pena y cansar mucho, y así creed que lo estoy tanto dellas, y de lo que pasa en este mundo, que si no fuese por las [cosas] de Granada, y otras a que no se puede dexar de acudir, no sé qué me haría […]. Cierto yo no estoy bueno para el mundo que agora corre, que conozco yo muy bien que havría menester otra condición no tan buena como Dios me la ha dado, que solo para mi es ruin. Y esto pagánmelo muy mal muchos; plega a Dios que allý se lo paguen mejor.[490]

Entonces, casi milagrosamente, pareció que todos los problemas desaparecían. En 1571, las tropas de Felipe habían pacificado tanto los Países Bajos como Granada; su cuarta esposa, Ana, dio a luz al tan deseado heredero; y su hermano consiguió una espectacular victoria naval sobre las fuerzas otomanas en Lepanto. Espinosa rebosaba de alegría: España tenía un príncipe heredero, se ufanaba al duque de Alba, «como avíamos tanto menester, quedando Su Magestad con salud; y con esto y con la victoria tan grande en la mar (y la mayor después de la del Vermejo [la de Moisés en el mar Rojo]), parece que nos queda poco que desear y mucho que [e]sperar de su benditíssima mano». Algunos observadores, sin embargo, no compartían el entusiasmo de Espinosa. Ese mismo día, el agudo agente del duque de Alba en la corte advertía de que

el mundo anda aquí como suele, digo el govierno, porque el rojo [es decir, el cardenal] todavía trae la machina a cuestas, aunque no falta quien desea descargarle della, a lo menos de parte; y pasa la cosa tan adelante que ya los predicadores dizen a Su Magestad en los púlpitos claramente lo mal que haçe cargar tanto a uno.

Los hechos demostrarían pronto la insensatez tanto de algunas políticas que «el rojo» había recomendado como de hacer «cargar tanto a uno».[491]

«Plantar un mundo nuevo»: el duque de Alba y los Países Bajos

Alba viajó a Bruselas en 1567 con una detallada agenda marcada durante sus reuniones mano a mano con Felipe: «Si Vuestra Magestad mira bien lo que hay que hacer», afirmaba el duque, «verá que es plantar un mundo nuevo». El rey había puesto parte de esta agenda en instrucciones formales, pero otras decisiones quedaban secretas, y en junio de 1568 Alba entregó a su señor un detallado informe «de la orden que traía en la cabeza de llevar consecutivamente en los negocios, el uno después del otro, posponiéndolos o anteponiéndolos como por lo que abajo diré Vuestra Magestad verá, para castigar lo pasado y dar forma en lo presente y el venidero».[492]

La primera y más importante tarea que Felipe encomendó al duque fue «prender los hombres principales culpados o sospechos para castigarles exemplarmente, y asimismo alguna de la gente de poca cualidad más culpada». Así, dos semanas después de llegar a Bruselas, Alba creaba el Consejo de Trublas para juzgar a todos aquellos sospechosos de rebelión o herejía. Arrestó a los condes de Egmont y Hornes, a sus secretarios y a otros varios líderes políticos, todos acusados de traición, y en marzo de 1568 se arrestó simultáneamente a más de quinientos sospechosos en casi todas las provincias de los Países Bajos. A lo largo de los cinco años siguientes, el Consejo de Trublas juzgó a más de doce mil personas por traición, condenó a casi nueve

mil de ellas a la pérdida de parte o la totalidad de sus bienes, y ejecutó a más de mil, incluidos Egmont y Hornes, que fueron ahorcados en la plaza Mayor de Bruselas el 5 de junio de 1568. [493]

En las cosas de la Hacienda, Alba no podía dar cuenta del mismo éxito. Felipe le había encargado reformar la estructura financiera de los Países Bajos a fin de que las provincias pudieran no solo financiar su propia administración y defensa (para incluir la construcción de nuevas ciudadelas y el sueldo de diez mil soldados españoles), sino también proporcionar «300.000 [ducados] que pueda Vuestra Magestad cada año meter en su caja para que, juntos estos por algunos años, puedan servir para las necesidades que viniesen». Felipe había especificado que estos fondos deberían proceder de un nuevo impuesto sobre la venta (una alcabala) en los Países Bajos; pero en vista de la tenaz resistencia del país, Alba suspendió temporalmente el proyecto. En abril de 1568, Guillermo de Nassau, en su calidad de príncipe soberano de Orange, dio órdenes de reclutar tropas en Francia, Inglaterra y Alemania para luchar contra Alba, quien (según afirmaba Orange) había confiscado ilegalmente sus propiedades. Sin embargo, después de una campaña de casi seis meses, el duque había logrado acabar con la mayoría de sus adversarios. Solo unos pocos consiguieron escapar, entre ellos Orange.

Alba consideró su campaña como una prueba del favor divino en pro de la causa de Felipe («[Dios] sea loado que tan clara y abiertamente favorece las cosas de Vuestra Magestad»), pero al rey le interesaban más los nuevos impuestos.[494] Felipe había insistido siempre a su lugarteniente que «es más que necesario dar orden como aya renta firme, cierta y perpetua para la sustentación y defensión de essos stados sacada de [e]llos mismos, pues está claro que de aquí no se ha de llevar siempre el dinero […] para ello». Tras haber enviado casi dos millones

de ducados para derrotar al príncipe de Orange y financiado la costosa guerra contra los moriscos de Granada, el rey repetía en una carta ológrafa: «He gran myedo que aver quitado tanto [dinero] de lo de acá para lo de ay nos ha de poner algún día en tanto aprieto que nos venga a faltar todo en el tiempo que más sea menester, pues ocasiones no faltan para poderse temer esto». [495]

Alba no podía ignorar tal amenaza, y en 1569 convocó a los Estados de las diversas provincias neerlandesas y exigió que aprobaran tres nuevos impuestos diseñados por sus asesores financieros. El primero fue un impuesto del uno por ciento sobre el rendimiento de cada inversión, conocido como «el centésimo dinero»; los Estados accedieron de mala gana, teniendo en cuenta que solo se gravaría una vez. Al final, produjo casi dos millones de ducados. Pero los Estados se negaron a aprobar los otros dos impuestos propuestos por el duque, que este quería que fueran permanentes: «El vigésimo dinero», un gravamen del cinco por ciento sobre todas las ventas de terrenos, y un impuesto del diez por ciento sobre todas las demás ventas, conocido como «el décimo dinero». El duque alojó a sus tropas españolas en las ciudades que tenían voto en los Estados, en un intento por conseguir que estos aprobaran los nuevos impuestos, hasta que en agosto de 1569 ofrecieron otros dos millones de ducados, pagaderos en dos años.

Tras sus grandes logros, Alba pidió al rey permiso para regresar a España. La respuesta de Felipe ponía de manifiesto hasta qué punto conocía bien a su quisquilloso subordinado. Componía una seductora mezcla de adulación y chantaje:

> Aunque lo que vos ahí habéis hecho y trabajado en servicio de Dios y mío, ha sido tanto que conozco muy bien haber sido el reparo y sostenimiento desos Estados, aunque de presente os parezca que lo de la religión, justicia, obediencia, hacienda, castillos, milicia y otras cosas que son tanto menester para su entero buen gobierno, seguridad y conservación esté en buen término, que no

residiendo vos ahí más tiempo para lo acabar de asentar enteramente, volvería muy fácilmente atrás.

Por tanto, proseguía Felipe con astucia, «el prevenir y atender a esto os toca a vos muy en particular por ser obra vuestra y tal que, si en alguna manera se estragase o se siguiese algún siniestro suceso por haberlo dejado imperfecto, no podría dejar de causaros mucha pena y sentimiento». Pero, por otra parte, «veo y conozco muy bien la mucha razón y justas causas que tenéis para veniros a reposar después de tan larga ausencia y tan excesivos trabajos de [e]spíritu y cuerpo como habéis pasado después que de aquí partiste». Felipe devolvía entonces la petición al peticionario: «Os ruego y encargo muy encarecidamente» que, pesando las alternativas «con la prudencia cristiana de que Dios os he dotado, y teniendo el principal respecto que siempre habéis tenido a lo que toca y cumple a su servicio y mío», fuese el propio duque quien decidiera si podía partir tranquilo sin «los inconvenientes que a mí se me representan». En este último caso, Alba debía avisarle «luego dello con correo expresso; y en teniendo vuestra respuesta nombraré y os enviaré sucesor en tiempo que él le tenga para ir y estar allí algunos días antes de vuestra partida». [496]

La carta de Felipe era brillante: aunque aparentaba dejar libertad de decisión a Alba, la pregunta de cómo se sentiría si «se siguiese algún siniestro suceso por haberlo dejado imperfecto» hacía imposible que se marchase. Durante el resto de su vida, Alba lamentaría la decisión que tomó en 1570 de no volver a España, cuando su reputación todavía se mantenía más o menos intacta y su rey le estaba profundamente agradecido por su papel en «el reparo y sostenimiento desos Estados». Pero todo aquello pertenecía al futuro. Por el momento, a Alba le preocupaba un aspecto delicado del viaje de la futura reina Ana de Austria a España a través de los Países Bajos.

La solitaria muerte del barón de Montigny

Cuatro años antes, Margarita de Parma, regente en los Países Bajos, había mandado a Floris de Montmorency, barón de Montigny y hermano del conde de Hornes, como enviado especial suyo a España. Nada más llegar a Madrid la noticia del arresto de Egmont y Hornes, Felipe mandó encarcelar a Montigny en el Alcázar de Segovia. Durante su interrogatorio, el barón negó haber cometido ninguna acción reprobable, pero el testimonio de sus colegas y los documentos confiscados a estos sugerían lo contrario. El barón también había insultado al rey en su propia cara al negarse a volver a los Países Bajos en julio de 1566 *(véase capítulo 8)* y, lo que resultaba aún más incriminatorio, nueve meses después de su arresto había intentado escapar (y casi lo había conseguido). El Consejo de Trublas declaró a Montigny culpable de traición y rebelión, y decretó que «le será cortada la cabeza y puesta en un palo alto». Alba remitió el informe a Felipe y mantuvo en secreto este veredicto hasta que recibió una respuesta.[497] Poco después, Ana de Austria llegó a Bruselas, de camino a su casamiento con Felipe, y, según informó Alba, los parientes y amigos del barón le hablaron de su larga trayectoria de servicio a los Habsburgo. Ella se mostró de acuerdo en defender su causa. El duque señalaba que podría resultar difícil cortarle la cabeza a Montigny y ponerla en un palo alto si Ana le rogaba a su nuevo marido que le perdonase la vida. Sería mucho más fácil para Felipe ajusticiar a Montigny antes y simular luego que había muerto de causas naturales.[498]

Felipe agradeció este consejo, y, aunque la mayoría de sus ministros habrían preferido «echar algún genero de veneno en la comida o bebida», no obstante «a Su Magestad paresció que desta manera no se cumplía con la justicia y que era mejor darle un garrote en la cárcel con tan gran secreto que nunca viniese a

entender sino que había fallescido de su muerte natural».[499] Pero ¿dónde tendría lugar la ejecución? Felipe descartó el Alcázar de Segovia, porque allí tenía previsto casarse con Ana, de modo que, en agosto de 1570 (mientras su novia se preparaba para salir de los Países Bajos), Felipe ordenó a don Eugenio de Peralta, el encargado del castillo de Simancas, ir a Segovia y trasladar bajo custodia a Montigny al archivo fortaleza.

Felipe orquestó entonces una de las disimulaciones más intrincadas y extraordinarias de toda su vida. Peralta permitió que su prisionero gozara de una inusual libertad dentro de las murallas de Simancas, llegando incluso a dejarle salir «a tomar sol en un corredor». El 1 de octubre, el día antes de que doña Ana desembarcara en Santander, un ministro de confianza explicaba el complicado engaño del rey: Peralta debería dejar un falsificado «escripto en latín cerca del aposento» de Montigny, en el que este al parecer revelaría sus nuevos planes de huida, lo que justificaría poner al barón bajo estricto confinamiento. A continuación, Peralta escribió una carta llena de falsedades, específicamente (según Felipe le explicó más adelante a Alba) «para que aquí se pudiese mostrar y también allá» en Flandes. En ella se describía su descubrimiento del «escripto», el plan de huida y el confinamiento estricto, añadiendo que el barón sufría en ese momento de «una calentura (según los médicos dicen) de ruin especie». Peralta mandó entonces llamar a un médico «para que entrase y saliese en la fortaleza como que iba a curar al dicho de Montigny, haciendo traer medicinas como si estuviera enfermo», y también a un confesor.[500]

El siguiente paso del plan de Felipe requería que un alcalde (juez) de la Casa Real, junto con el confesor, un escribano y un verdugo, llegaran a Simancas. A última hora del sábado 14 de octubre comunicaron al barón la sentencia de muerte. Felipe

había dado órdenes de que «se podrá diferir la ejecución» hasta la noche siguiente, para que Montigny «tenga más tiempo para confesar y recibir los sacramentos si pareciere, y para se convertir a Dios y arrepentirse» (lo que constituye una reveladora prueba de que el rey y sus principales ministros españoles creían que los nobles flamencos eran herejes). El barón, una vez recobrada la compostura, comulgó y redactó una declaración de sus deudas y de su inocencia. Expresaba su agradecimiento por «la real clemencia y benignidad» al decidir «que no se ejecutase en público, sino allí en secreto», pero negaba su culpa, «siempre protestando su inocencia en los artículos del príncipe de Orange y rebelión». Luego, «acabada su plática», tuvo lugar el último acto de «dissimulación» de Felipe:

> El verdugo hizo su oficio, dándole garrote. Y a la hora, se volvieron el alcalde y el escribano y el verdugo a Valladolid, de manera que nadie supo que habían estado en Simancas, poniendo pena de muerte a los dichos escribano y verdugo si lo descubriesen. Tras esto, se vistió al dicho de Montigni el hábito de San Francisco, porque se encubriese el habérsele dado garrote, y luego se publicó la muerte y se trató de su enterramiento.

Para cuando Ana llegó a Valladolid, a solo diez kilómetros de Simancas, Montigny llevaba dos semanas muerto y, como se regodeaba Felipe en una carta a Alba, su engaño «sucedió tan bien, que hasta agora todos tienen creído que murió de enfermedad, y así se ha de dar a entender allá». Los ruegos de su nueva esposa para la liberación de Montigny habían llegado, sencillamente, demasiado tarde, y sin duda el rey pasó con la conciencia tranquila su noche de bodas en el Alcázar de Segovia.[501]

Otro Nuevo Mundo

La dura política adoptada por Felipe y Espinosa en los Países Bajos formaba parte de una notable estrategia imperial. En 1568 el rey encargó a Espinosa la creación de un comité de ministros de confianza, que sería conocido como la Junta

Magna, para revisar toda la administración colonial con el objetivo de reducir el riesgo de resistencia por parte de sus vasallos en América. Desde el primer momento, la Junta seguía el admirable principio de «que las cosas generales en todos estos puntos son las que de acá se puedan ordenar y asentar, pero las particulares y menudas forzoso se han de someter a los que fueren a ejecutar las dichas cosas». Comenzó por la religión. Sus miembros debatieron sobre cómo asegurar un apostolado más eficaz, y recomendaron celebrar consejos provinciales y visitas episcopales, como dictaba Trento, y crear nuevas diócesis, cada una de ellas con un seminario, otro requerimiento tridentino. La Junta pasó a continuación a considerar la mejor manera de establecer esta extensa red eclesiástica, y recomendó un mejor reparto de los diezmos a fin de que las iglesias y conventos locales recibieran más apoyo. También tenían que poner «silencio a la contrariedad de opiniones que en los predicadores y confesores a avido y ay en aquellas provincias sobre la jurisdición y seguridad de conciencia de lo que en ellas se adquirió y adquiere y posee»; en otras palabras, los inquisidores debían silenciar a cualquier clérigo que pusiera en cuestión la legalidad de la conquista y los derechos del rey de Castilla.[502]

A continuación, la Junta Magna trató de la economía. Para mejorar la situación de los súbditos indígenas de Felipe, se propusieron reformas al sistema de propiedad territorial; para estimular la producción, se proyectaron nuevos reglamentos para la minería, el comercio y la manufactura; y para aumentar los ingresos de la corona, se recomendó una tributación dirigida más a las comunidades que a los individuos, combinada con una alcabala. Tras tres meses de intensas y concentradas deliberaciones, la Junta Magna presentó sus extensas recomendaciones al rey. Por otra parte, para que los virreyes fueran a la vez «temidos y queridos», don Francisco de Toledo, nombrado virrey del Perú por Felipe, solicitaba que les dejara

usar tanto «el cuchillo del castigo» como «la gratificación del premio». Felipe lo aceptó todo, y también concedió los mismos poderes a don Martín Enríquez, el nuevo virrey de Nueva España, para gastar dinero sin su expreso permiso siempre que lo hiciera en pro de la «pacificación» y «en tiempo de alvorotos y guerra».[503] Gracias a esta flexibilidad, Enríquez organizó una eficaz defensa de la frontera norte de Nueva España, librando una «guerra a sangre y a fuego» contra los chichimecas a partir de 1570; mientras que Toledo emprendía una importante campaña contra los incas supervivientes a partir de 1572 y enviaba ayuda financiera y material a los colonos de Chile en su lucha contra los araucanos. Gracias a todas estas medidas, la mayor parte de América siguió siendo española, hasta el siglo XIX, y católica, hasta hoy. Este fue el mayor logro de Felipe.

La rebelión de las Alpujarras

La Junta Magna fue uno de los dos órganos presididos por el cardenal Espinosa al que Felipe encargó la tarea de promover la uniformidad entre sus vasallos. El otro era la junta creada en 1566 para decidir qué hacer respecto a los moriscos, de los que había unos 400.000 en España, el equivalente a un seis por ciento de la población total. Esta minoría étnica no estaba repartida por igual en todo el país: unos 150.000 vivían en los reinos de Aragón y Valencia, donde constituían entre una quinta y una tercera parte de la población, mientras que otros 140.000 habitaban en el reino de Granada, donde representaban más de la mitad del número total de habitantes (incluida la propia ciudad de Granada). Algunas regiones montañosas, como las Alpujarras, apenas contaban con cristianos viejos.

Desde que en 1502 los Reyes Católicos expulsaran a todos los musulmanes que no se convirtieron al cristianismo, las autoridades se habían esforzado por integrar a los que se habían

quedado. En 1526, Carlos V presidió una junta que formuló veinticinco mandatos destinados a cristianizar a estos moriscos, pero luego acordó suspenderlos durante cuarenta años a cambio de un sustancial pago por parte de la comunidad morisca. Los líderes moriscos de entonces habían elegido un momento ideal para conseguir un aplazamiento, dado que la conquista de Hungría por parte de los turcos y la guerra con Francia dejaban a Carlos desesperado por el dinero y deseoso de mantener la paz dentro de España. La situación internacional en 1566, cuando expiró el plazo de cuarenta años, parecía igualmente propicia para renovar la suspensión, con la guerra en el Mediterráneo y alteraciones en los Países Bajos y en Nueva España, pero, a diferencia de su padre, Felipe se negó. La junta presidida por Espinosa ordenó que «se executasen los decretos de la Junta del emperador Carlos V en el año mil y quinientos y veinte y seis», y una pragmática real pregonada tanto en árabe como en castellano ordenaba a los moriscos a renunciar a su vestimenta, lengua, costumbres y prácticas religiosas en el plazo de un año, bajo pena de multas y cárcel.[504]

Frente a este ataque a sus vidas y libertades, y dándose cuenta de que no podían esperar más concesiones de Felipe, un grupo de moriscos empezó a planear una importante insurrección, la primera en Castilla desde la de los comuneros. El 24 de diciembre de 1568, los habitantes de casi doscientas aldeas moriscas de las Alpujarras asesinaron a sacerdotes, sacristanes y oligarcas locales. Entre tanto, un destacamento especial trató sin éxito de persuadir a los moriscos del Albaicín de Granada para que se unieran a ellos.

En ese momento, los insurgentes en armas probablemente no sumaban más de cuatro mil, y las autoridades locales contraatacaron rápidamente y consiguieron la rendición de muchos. Pero perdieron el control de sus tropas, cuyas numerosas atrocidades dieron nuevas alas a la rebelión. A las

Alpujarras llegó un tropel de nuevos voluntarios y al menos cuatro mil berébéres y turcos, lo que les permitió amenazar las villas cristianas en las llanuras costeras. Esta escalada obligó a Felipe a mandar llamar a los tercios viejos de Italia y a desplazarse personalmente a Andalucía. En febrero de 1570, el rey entró en Córdoba a caballo, a paso lento y majestuoso, describiendo círculos sobre su montura, para que toda la multitud allí congregada pudiera admirarle. Pero pese a que el hecho constituyó un notorio alarde de confianza en sí mismo, no sirvió para poner fin a la guerra y, temeroso de que los moriscos de Aragón y Valencia se pronunciaran a favor de los rebeldes, el rey envió un emisario a las Alpujarras para negociar un «concierto con los moros». En mayo «se rindieron y entregaron el estandarte y sujetaron a la misericordia de Su Magestad».[505]

Felipe y sus ministros se dispusieron entonces a preparar una «solución definitiva» al problema de los moriscos de Granada. En noviembre de 1570, de acuerdo con un programa prefijado, unos 50.000 moriscos fueron conducidos en masa a hospitales e iglesias ya determinados. Para crear una falsa sensación de seguridad entre los deportados, Felipe dio instrucciones a los comisarios encargados de supervisar la operación para que explicaran que la guerra había dejado devastada Granada hasta el punto de que «es imposible poderse sustentar en ella», y que

> por el presente los dichos cristianos nuevos se saquen deste reyno y se lleven a Castilla y a las otras provincias donde el año ha sido abundante y no han padescido a causa de las guerras y donde con gran comodidad podrán comer y sustentarse el año presente, y se podrá ir considerando para qué tiempo y cómo se podrán volver a sus cosas.[506]

Esto era completamente falso —se había decidido ya que ningún morisco volvería a Granada—, pero, como en el caso de Montigny, Felipe consideró que el engaño era esencial para el éxito de la operación. Durante los dos meses siguientes, una

cuarta parte de los deportados murieron de hambre, mientras marchaban por los caminos bajo la lluvia y la nieve o bien en el mar cuando las tormentas descargaron sobre las galeras que debían trasladarlos. Según el historiador José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, «la guerra de Granada costó, pues, no menos de noventa mil muertos por todos los conceptos».[507]

Pero la limpieza étnica solo constituía la mitad de la solución definitiva de Felipe al problema morisco. En 1571, el rey anexionó todas las tierras de los deportados e invitó a los moradores de los demás reinos de España a establecerse en ellas. Creó el Consejo de Población en Granada, que adquirió y dimensionó las propiedades de los moriscos deportados para luego distribuirlas entre los nuevos pobladores cristianos. El consejo garantizó el sustento de los recién llegados hasta que pudieran mantenerse con sus propias cosechas, y les ofreció una amplia variedad de otros incentivos. En 1598, unas 60.000 personas se habían mudado ya a más de 250 comunidades distintas enclavadas en el reino de Granada.

Este complejo proceso de limpieza étnica puso de manifiesto la visión y el poder de Felipe: ningún otro gobernante occidental de su época podría haber planeado y organizado un movimiento de población semejante. Sin embargo, fracasó. En primer lugar, muchos pueblos de las zonas más pobres de Asturias y Galicia quedaron abandonados o arruinados con la marcha a Granada de sus habitantes más emprendedores. Por otra parte, la propia Granada sufrió una catastrófica pérdida de población: la región de las Alpujarras, habitada por casi 6.000 vecinos según el censo de 1561, contabilizaba menos de 2.000 en 1587; el reino en conjunto perdió una cuarta parte de su población anterior a la guerra. Y, por último, aunque la limpieza étnica eliminó de forma permanente el riesgo de que una «quinta columna» islámica en el sur de España recibiera con los brazos abiertos a la flota turca

y a los corsarios de Berbería, ciudades que siglos antes habían sido liberadas de la ocupación musulmana ahora de repente tenían un «albaicín». Un análisis del ADN de la población actual de España muestra una ausencia casi total de cromosomas típicamente africanos en Andalucía oriental, pero ¡una fuerte presencia de estos elementos (hasta el veinte por ciento) en Galicia, León y Extremadura![508]

Lepanto: «La victoria mayor después de la del Vermejo»

La guerra de Granada dejó exhausta a la Hacienda de Castilla, y malparada de cara a lo que los españoles denominaron simplemente «la batalla naval». El camino hacia Lepanto empezó en 1570, cuando una gruesa Armada otomana ocupó la isla veneciana de Chipre, salvo la fortaleza y el puerto de Famagusta. Venecia buscó desesperadamente la ayuda de otras potencias cristianas del Mediterráneo, y encontró un entusiasta defensor en Pío V, que veía esta lucha como una cruzada. Aunque el papa mandó enviados a todos los gobernantes cristianos para que formaran una Santa Liga con el fin de salvar a Chipre y hacer retroceder las fuerzas del Islam, tenía depositada su principal esperanza en Felipe.

Desde el principio, el rey exigió un alto precio a cambio de su apoyo. Los papas anteriores habían concedido a los reyes de Castilla el derecho a recaudar tres impuestos especiales en nombre de la Iglesia, conocidos como «las tres gracias», para causas piadosas: la cruzada, el subsidio y el excusado. La ansiedad de Pío por crear una Santa Liga constituía para Felipe una oportunidad de oro para exigir la renovación de los tres impuestos y mejorar sus condiciones. Su embajador en Roma le dijo al papa, en marzo de 1570, que «no començándole Su Beatitud con conceder la cruzada era impossibilitar el effecto; porque sin esta graçia, y otra muchas, Vuestra Magestad aún no

podía attender a la defensa de sus Estados, quanto más emprender en un mismo tiempo las guerras tan difficultosas como esta». La estrategia dio resultado: Pío fue tan generoso al autorizar todas las concesiones financieras que, según la tosca frase de Espinosa, «ha a Su Santidad acontecido lo que nos los castellanos aquí decimos por refrán: que los estíticos mueren de cámaras».[509]

No obstante, Felipe seguía siendo reacio a arriesgar su Armada en el este del Mediterráneo; solo aceptó unirse a la Liga porque creía que, como miembro más poderoso, podría dictar la estrategia global. Quería reconquistar Túnez, capturado por el rey de Argel el año anterior, y, cuando quedó claro que no se saldría con su deseo, consideró seriamente echarse atrás. «No me ha pesado que no se aya concluydo» la Liga, dijo a principios de 1571, porque «como agora está, yo creo que no se ha de hazer cosa buena ni empresa, y que es imposible cumplir yo lo que ofrezco, no solamente este año (que esto es imposible), mas ni los que vienen, y que no bastarían para ello cuatro tantas "gracias" que las que se me dan […]. Yo me engañé mucho en esto».[510] Solo tras muchas y muy duras negociaciones firmaron los plenipotenciarios de Felipe la Santa Liga en Roma, en mayo de 1571, en virtud de la cual el monarca español se obligaba al pago de la mitad del presupuesto operativo, mientras que Venecia, el papa y algunos otros aliados italianos compartían el resto. Don Juan de Austria comandaría la flota combinada, que se congregaría en Mesina.

Se reunieron demasiado tarde para salvar Famagusta o detener el avance de una enorme flota otomana que navegaba por la costa de la Creta veneciana, saqueando los pueblos y secuestrando a sus habitantes. Sin embargo, a finales de septiembre, encontrándose faltos de provisiones y con un copioso botín por vender, los almirantes otomanos decidieron pasar el invierno en el golfo de Lepanto. Al parecer, daban por

hecho que sus adversarios no se atreverían a iniciar operaciones estando tan avanzada la temporada de campaña, pero Felipe ya había tomado otra decisión. «Poco provecho ni effecto puede ser aquella gruesa junta de infantería, caballería, galeras y naves», insistía, si se limitaba a defender sus propias bases, mientras que «saquear las costas y tierras del enemigo no es fructo de importancia». En su lugar, el rey sostenía que «lo mejor sería que se juntasse una gruesa vanda de galeras, qual pareçiesse convenir y ser bastante para ser superior a la del enemigo, y con ella hazer los effectos que conviniesse y attender principalmente y quebrantarle las fuerças de la mar, que es el verdadero daño y más en benefficio de la cristiandad».[511]

El rey ya debía haber recalcado esta audaz estrategia a su medio hermano antes de que este partiera de España, porque don Juan de Austria, de su puño y letra, informó a su aliado en la corte, Ruy Gómez, de que había decidido que su flota pasara «adelante con la intinción de pelear, como se verá». Y concluyó: «La gana que en esta armada ay de pelear es mucha y la confiança en los de vençer no menos […] ¡Lo demás que Vuestra Merced querra saver, entenderá por coronistas!».[512] Don Juan partió con la mayor flota cristiana jamás vista en el Mediterráneo: 280 galeras y hasta otros treinta barcos de guerra. La flota se dirigió primero a Corfú, pero, al no encontrar guarniciones otomanas que atacar, bajó hasta el golfo de Lepanto. Antes del amanecer del 7 de octubre, toda la flota otomana —230 galeras y unas setenta naves más ligeras— zarpó de sus puertos. Unos 170.000 hombres, aproximadamente la mitad de ellos remeros y el resto combatientes, lucharon en la batalla de Lepanto, y, al atardecer, 60.000 de ellos estaban muertos o heridos. Aunque las fuerzas de la Liga habían sufrido graves pérdidas —puede que unos 7.500 muertos y 20.000 heridos, entre ellos Miguel de Cervantes—, habían conseguido una contundente victoria al

capturar 130 navíos de guerra otomanos, 400 piezas de artillería y casi 3.500 prisioneros. Además, habían liberado a unos 15.000 esclavos de galeras que se encontraban entre la flota otomana, la cual perdió también otros 110 barcos que fueron hundidos.

¿Fue Lepanto «la más memorable y alta ocasión que vieron los pasados siglos, ni esperan ver los venideros» (como afirmó Cervantes), por no decir «la mayor victoria que ha sido nunca en la mar» (como aseguró el comandante naval Juan Andrea Doria) o «la mayor después de la del Vermejo» (el veredicto de Espinosa)? No, porque Chipre continuó estando en manos otomanas y los vencedores no consiguieron el deseo del Senado veneciano de «privar por todos los medios al enemigo de la posibilidad de rehacer su flota».[513] Pero de no haberse librado y ganado esta batalla, la vasta flota turca habría zarpado de sus fondeaderos en el golfo de Lepanto a principios de 1572 y tal vez habría conquistado los cercanos reductos venecianos en el Adriático o incluso Creta. En cambio, su derrota desencadenó varios levantamientos entre los cristianos de Grecia y Albania, que durante un tiempo amenazaron el control otomano de la península.

«Matar o prender a la Isabel»

La campaña de Lepanto no fue la única cruzada emprendida por Felipe en 1571. Nada más unirse a la Santa Liga, autorizó la invasión de Inglaterra y el derrocamiento de Isabel Tudor. No era la primera vez. A finales de 1568, Isabel había capturado algunos barcos que transportaban dinero desde España a los Países Bajos; aunque ese dinero no era estrictamente de propiedad real, pertenecía a un consorcio de banqueros genoveses que habían acordado prestárselo al duque de Alba para pagar los sueldos de su ejército. El embajador de Felipe en Inglaterra, el caballero catalán don Guerau de Spes,

interpretó esto como el primer paso de una guerra comercial e instó tanto a Alba en los Países Bajos como a Felipe en España a confiscar barcos y mercancías inglesas. Ambos accedieron, e Isabel puso a Spes bajo arresto. Pocos meses antes, Felipe había expulsado al embajador inglés ante su corte, el doctor John Man, un clérigo protestante casado, basándose en que su continuada presencia en la corte podía ofender «a Dios Nuestro Señor, cuyo servicio y observaçión de su sancta fee tengo yo tan delante en todas mis cosas y actiones, y llevo tan antepuesta a todas las cosas desta vida y a la mía propia».[514] Retóricas aparte, sin Man y Spes, Felipe no poseía ningún canal diplomático directo a través del cual resolver cualquier conflicto con Inglaterra.

Esta anomalía aumentó la influencia del duque de Alba sobre la política del rey respecto a Inglaterra. Alba había residido allí durante la década de 1550 y, además de seguir contando con una red de información sobre el terreno, tenía sus propios planes. Por un lado, nunca había estado de acuerdo con sustituir a Isabel Tudor por María Estuardo, reina de Escocia, a quien muchos católicos consideraban la legítima soberana también de Inglaterra debido a que había sido reina de Francia y mantenía estrechas relaciones con sus parientes franceses. Por otra parte, dado que la prosperidad de los Países Bajos dependía del comercio con Inglaterra, Alba se oponía a cualquier política que pusiera ese comercio en peligro.

A principios de 1569, indignado por el encarcelamiento de Spes y la confiscación del tesoro genovés, Felipe contempló la posibilidad de lanzar un ataque abierto contra Inglaterra, y le pidió a Alba que le sugiriera la mejor manera de llevarlo a cabo. Alba se negó: en su contundente respuesta afirmaba que las invasiones coordinadas por el príncipe de Orange el año anterior habían dejado sus arcas vacías, y por tanto todos los fondos para la intervención en Inglaterra tendrían que proceder

de España. La revuelta de las Alpujarras excluía esa posibilidad, pero esto hizo que Felipe se mostrara más receptivo a una propuesta de Roberto Ridolfi, un banquero florentino que manejaba los fondos secretos enviados por el papa a los líderes de los católicos ingleses. En febrero de 1569, Ridolfi visitó a Spes (a pesar de su confinamiento) y le entregó un mensaje del duque de Norfolk y dos consejeros católicos de Isabel expresando su intención de obligar a la reina a restablecer los lazos tanto con Roma como con España. A tal propósito, Ridolfi llevaba un código en clave para utilizar en todas las comunicaciones con los nobles ingleses, lo que garantizaba que, dado que Spes permanecía bajo arresto domiciliario, Ridolfi constituiría la única conexión entre ellos.

Sin dejar que su ardor se viera mermado por estos problemas técnicos, y sin sospechar tampoco de la facilidad con la que Ridolfi había conseguido tener acceso a él, Spes le confió un plan ambicioso, para el que había acuñado un sonoro término: la Empresa de Inglaterra. Este plan apelaba a Felipe con el fin de que convenciera a los demás Estados europeos para boicotear el comercio con Inglaterra, enviase apoyo financiero a Norfolk y fomentara el descontento de los católicos irlandeses hacia la soberanía inglesa. En un aspecto aún más radical, Spes sugería que el rey respaldara el derecho de María Estuardo al trono inglés o bien lo reclamara para sí mismo. En marzo de 1571, pertrechado de «instrucciones, encargos y cartas» de Norfolk y María, Ridolfi partió de Inglaterra en busca de apoyo extranjero. Primero, explicó su misión al duque de Alba, el cual expresó sus sospechas acerca de la facilidad con la que Ridolfi había conseguido salir de Inglaterra con tantos documentos incriminatorios en su poder, y sugirió (con razón) que podría tratarse de un agente doble. Sin embargo, permitió que Ridolfi se dirigiera a Roma.

El momento era favorable. El año anterior, Pío V había

emitido una bula declarando a Isabel depuesta y ahora buscaba la manera de llevar esto a cabo. Durante algún tiempo, la Liga le distrajo de este asunto, pero, al ver que sus esfuerzos estaban cada vez más cerca de alcanzar el éxito, escuchó con gran interés y entusiasmo la propuesta de Ridolfi. El 20 de mayo de 1571, el mismo día en que sus plenipotenciarios firmaban la Santa Liga, el papa confió a Ridolfi unas cartas en las que instaba a Felipe a apoyar la Empresa de Inglaterra. Seis semanas después, Ridolfi fue recibido por el rey en una audiencia en la que no solo presentó su plan, sino que también apeló a la familiaridad del rey con los asuntos ingleses y a su claro mandato por parte de Dios de reclamar la isla una vez más para la fe católica. Cuando el nuncio consiguió una audiencia para instar a Felipe a apoyar el complot de Ridolfi, se encontró, para su sorpresa, con que «Su Majestad, contrariamente a lo que en él era habitual [durante las audiencias], habló extensa y detalladamente sobre los medios, el lugar y los hombres» implicados en la Empresa de Inglaterra.

> Finalizaba diciendo que llevaba largo tiempo deseando y esperando una ocasión y oportunidad para reducir, con la ayuda de Dios, ese reino a la fe [católica] y la obediencia a la Sede Apostólica por segunda vez, y que creía que había llegado el momento y que aquella era la ocasión y la oportunidad que había estado esperando.[515]

Inmediatamente después de esta audiencia, Felipe se trasladó a El Escorial, donde, al poco tiempo, decidió que debía apartar por la fuerza a Isabel Tudor del trono inglés. En julio, envió una carta secreta a Alba en la que afirmaba que María Estuardo era «la verdadera y legitima subçessora» al trono inglés, «que la Isabel lo posee con tiranía». Luego, compartía con el duque la información de Ridolfi:

> Para venir a esto el duque de Norfolk tiene tal deliberación y tantos y tan principales amigos que, siendo asistido por mi parte, le sería fácil matar o prender a la Isabel y poner en libertad, y en la posesión del reyno, a la de Scocia; y que casándose con ella el dicho duque como lo tienen tratado sin difficultad lo reduçirían a la obediencia se la sede apostólica.

A tal efecto, Alba debía preparar un poderoso ejército y una gran flota. El rey, por su parte, prometía enviar 200.000 ducados —pero «os prevengo y encargo muy expressamente que no se ha de gastar un tan solo real dellas en otra cosa ninguna, por urgente que sea»—, a fin de que Alba pudiera tenerlo todo listo para la fuerza de invasión. Consciente, sin duda, de lo poco realista que todo ello podía parecer, Felipe afirmaba su confianza en que «Dios que como en causa tan suya nos alumbraría ayudaría y asistiría con su braço y mano poderosa para que se açertase».[516]

Uno de los consejeros que había acompañado el rey a El Escorial manifestó sus serios recelos respecto a que «Su Magestad está tan adelante en la determynación desto de Inglaterra» a pesar de que «el duque [de Alba] estuvo tan desconfiado». No obstante, continuaba, «cierto ni he visto ni pudiera creer quán caliente está Su Magestad en este negocio». El rey se entusiasmaba aún más a medida que se aproximaban las fiestas de San Lorenzo, hasta el punto de que «va Su Magestad en este negocio con tanto calor que cierto parece bien cosa de Dios».[517] Incluso después de recibir la noticia de que Isabel había ordenado el arresto de Norfolk y encargado al carcelero de María de Escocia que vigilara estrechamente su confinamiento, Felipe continuó manteniendo la esperanza de que Alba, o bien Ridolfi, pudieran conseguir algo. Incluso entre los gobernantes experimentados, el poder del autoengaño nunca debe subestimarse.

Felipe, solo

Aunque Cabrera de Córdoba, en su *Historia de Felipe II*, declaró que «este año 1571» fue «feliz a la Monarquía», para cuando terminó, a Felipe ya no le quedaba prácticamente ningún aliado. Dado que Ridolfi era un agente doble, Isabel no tardó en enterarse de que Felipe había planeado asesinarla y,

como no es de extrañar, nunca volvió a confiar en él. Por el contrario, aumentó la vigilancia sobre todos los católicos y ejecutó a aquellos que mostraron empecinamiento, incluido el duque de Norfolk. También apoyó cualquier actividad corsaria en su contra: en la década de 1570, partió de Inglaterra una docena de importantes expediciones dirigidas al saqueo de propiedades españolas en América. Sobre todo, prestó socorro a los rebeldes holandeses porque, como Alba explicó en un momento, «la reyna avía sido muy bien avisada de que por parte del rey nuestro señor se tratava de quitarla el reyno y aun de matarla», y, así, el duque disculpaba a Isabel de «lo que ha hecho y haze contra estos estados».[518] La política basada en la fe había dejado un legado envenenado.

Felipe también provocó un distanciamiento del emperador Maximiliano en 1571 al tratar de anexionarse el feudo imperial de Finale Ligure, un puerto cerca de Génova. Cuando sus espías anunciaron que Francia estaba preparada para intervenir en apoyo de una rebelión contra el señor de Finale, Felipe ordenó a su gobernador de Milán que lanzara una invasión por sorpresa, supuestamente para anticiparse a los franceses. Esta acción unilateral contra un feudo imperial indignó a Maximiliano, quien movilizó a los Estados independientes de Italia para que condenaran el ataque español. La emperatriz María trató de mediar entre su hermano y su marido, asegurándole a Felipe:

> [Dios] sabe lo que deseo ver acabado este negro negoçio del Final, para que no ay cosa que canse a Vuestra Alteza. Y çierto pienso que, sy no fuese por esta rreputaçión que nos ciega tanto, que [e]l emperador no aría lo que haze, qu[e] es importunar a Vuestra Alteza, aunqu[e] estoy muy confiada que el fin será el que deseamos, pues Vuestra Alteza ve que [no] deja el emperador de tener razón.[519]

Pero Felipe se mantuvo obstinado hasta que Maximiliano mandó a un comisario especial a residir en el ducado de Milán —también feudo imperial— con órdenes de velar, sin disimulo alguno, por sus intereses en Italia. Ante esta grave humillación,

Felipe retiró sus fuerzas de Finale. Su reconocimiento de «que [no] deja el emperador de tener razón» llegaba demasiado tarde. Maximiliano, enojado, rehusó ayudar a Felipe cuando, en 1572, el príncipe de Orange persuadió a otros a quienes las políticas de Felipe habían enemistado con este —Isabel Tudor, los protestantes alemanes, Carlos IX de Francia y sus vasallos calvinistas— para que apoyaran una nueva invasión de los Países Bajos.

La guerra de Granada impresionó al príncipe de Orange, que una vez más se encontraba en el exilio. «Es un ejemplo para nosotros», escribió a principios de 1570, «que los moros sean capaces de resistir tanto tiempo, aun tratándose de gente con menos sustancia que un rebaño de ovejas. ¿Qué sería entonces capaz de hacer la gente de los Países Bajos?».[520] El príncipe sabía, no obstante, que la «gente de los Países Bajos» no podía enfrentarse a Felipe sola, por lo que se esforzó al máximo en conseguir aliados. Primero, sus agentes establecieron lazos con las numerosas comunidades de exiliados flamencos, alrededor de unos 60.000 hombres, mujeres y niños que habían huido hacia Inglaterra, Escocia, Francia y Alemania para escapar del castigo del Consejo de Trublas. Algunos de estos exiliados pasarían a formar parte de la tripulación de una flota de unos treinta barcos que navegaban con patentes de corso emitidas por Orange a la caza de las naves mercantes de los súbditos y aliados de Felipe: los *Watergeuzen* o «Mendigos del Mar». Los exiliados también distribuían el botín obtenido por los Mendigos, recaudando de este modo dinero para la causa de Orange, así como para el mantenimiento de su propia flota. Entre tanto, Orange y su hermano Luis luchaban en Francia con el líder calvinista Gaspar de Coligny, fracasado defensor de San Quintín contra Felipe en 1557 e igualmente frustrado patrocinador del intento de colonizar La Florida en 1565. En 1570, cuando se firmó la Paz de Saint-Germain, Carlos IX les

reconoció, tanto a Luis como a Orange, como «buenos parientes y amigos» y empezó a pagarles una pensión.

Carlos IX también resolvió que su hermana Margarita se casara con el protestante Enrique de Borbón, rey de Navarra, y que, nada más se celebrara la boda, Coligny y sus seguidores protestantes invadieran los Países Bajos en apoyo de Orange. Impulsado por este extraordinario avance, Orange planeó otras invasiones para que coincidieran con la ofensiva principal que llevaría a cabo Coligny: los Mendigos del Mar, junto con un escuadrón calvinista reunido por Filippo Strozzi en La Rochela (La Rochelle), lanzarían un ataque anfibio sobre Holanda y Zelanda; un cuñado de Orange invadiría Güeldres (Gelderland) con un pequeño contingente procedente de Alemania; y el propio Orange, al igual que había hecho en 1568, reclutaría un ejército en Alemania e invadiría Brabante. El único problema residía en el tiempo: todo dependía de la fecha fijada para la boda de Margarita y Enrique, pero, tras sucesivos aplazamientos, en abril de 1572 Carlos IX anunció que se celebraría el agosto siguiente.

La segunda rebelión de los Países Bajos

Las condiciones en los Países Bajos difícilmente podían haber sido más favorables a la causa de Orange. El impacto combinado de los ataques navales de los Mendigos del Mar, el embargo comercial inglés y la guerra en el Báltico causaron una recesión económica, y el precio del trigo se disparó al tiempo que miles de familias perdían su medio de vida. La naturaleza vino a intensificar la miseria: las tormentas provocaron extensas inundaciones y el hielo y la nieve congelaron los ríos; una epidemia asoló el país. Alba suplicó al rey que enviara algún dinero desde España para aliviar la situación, pero en febrero de 1572 Felipe respondió que «con la Santa Liga y tantas otras cosas que hay que pagar desde aquí, es imposible satisfacer las

necesidades de los Países Bajos como hemos hecho hasta ahora». Un mes después, Felipe se mostraba aún más insistente: «Conviene y es mi voluntad que de aquí adelante se sustente [los Países Bajos] de la renta que se sacare del derecho del décimo dinero, que con tanta razón y justificación se ha impuesto», y encargó a Alba que

> encomendéis y mandéis de mi parte muy encarescidamente a los del mi consejo y otros ministros que intervienen en esto, que trabajen que se haga, assiente y concluya [el décimo dinero] con gran brevedad como yo dellos lo confío, siendo cosa tan importante a mi serviçio y a la conservación de su propia tierra».[521]

Esto dejaba a Alba sin opciones. El duque había pedido reiteradamente a los Estados de cada provincia que sancionaran el décimo dinero, pero estos se habían negado categóricamente. En vista de la inquebrantable presión del rey, Alba decidió recaudar el impuesto sin el consentimiento de los Estados y creó un nuevo equipo de funcionarios, que empezó a registrar todas las transacciones comerciales. Muchos tenderos y comerciantes de Bruselas cerraron sus negocios en señal de protesta, y, en marzo de 1572, Alba trasladó algunas compañías de infantería española a la ciudad, aunque sin resultado: las tiendas siguieron cerradas y la actividad económica, paralizada. Maximiliano Morillon, representante del cardenal Granvela en Bruselas, informaba a su amo de que «la pobreza se agudiza en todas partes», y miles de personas en Bruselas «mueren de hambre por no tener trabajo […]. Si el príncipe de Orange hubiera conservado sus fuerzas hasta un momento como este», concluía Morillon, «su empresa habría triunfado».[522] Morillon finalizó su carta el 24 de marzo de 1572: una semana después, el 1 de abril, un contingente de 1.100 miembros de los Mendigos del Mar capturó el puerto de Den Brielle, en Holanda, y sus líderes, actuando en nombre de Guillermo de Orange, declararon ampulosamente que todos serían bien tratados «salvo sacerdotes, monjes y papistas».

Dado que la incapacidad de Felipe para sofocar la rebelión de los Países Bajos constituyó su mayor fracaso político, merece la pena subrayar lo cerca que estuvo al principio de triunfar sobre sus oponentes. En primer lugar, Den Brielle era pequeño (tenía tan solo tres mil habitantes), aislado y carecía de fortificaciones. La noticia de que el escuadrón de Strozzi en La Rochela podía lanzar un ataque convenció a Alba de que no solo debía enviar allí tropas españolas, sino que la defensa eficaz del sur de Holanda y Zelanda requería la construcción de una ciudadela en el puerto más grande de la región: Flesinga (Vlissingen). El 29 de marzo de 1572, Alba envió a la ciudad a uno de sus más destacados arquitectos militares con los planos necesarios, y también una orden judicial para arrestar a los magistrados locales que no hubieran empezado a recaudar el décimo dinero.

El apuro de los magistrados de Flesinga da idea de los peligros de las políticas diseñadas por Espinosa y ejecutadas por Alba. Aunque el duque no recaudó nada de su décimo dinero, el impuesto encarnaba todos los aspectos desagradables de su «mundo nuevo»: era inconstitucional, opresivo, se requería para pagar a tropas extranjeras y era de inspiración española. Pero, sobre todo, socavaba gravemente la autoridad de los magistrados encargados de llevarlo a cabo. Los que no lograron resistir, tras fracasar en su intento de oponerse a otras impopulares medidas de Alba, perdieron el control de sus municipios; y, aunque Alba les sustituyó (al igual que en el caso de Flesinga), como comentó Morillon, «la autoridad de los magistrados nombrados para llevar a efecto el décimo dinero se ha desmoronado por completo».[523] Los Mendigos del Mar sabían lo que hacían cuando izaban, en los topes de sus mástiles, banderas con diez monedas.

Sin embargo, Felipe siguió presionando. El 16 de abril de 1572, justo antes de recibir noticias de la captura de Den

Brielle, el rey advirtió a Alba de que no podía enviar más dinero desde España, de modo que los Países Bajos no tendrían más remedio que sufragar su propia defensa a través del décimo dinero; pero los ciudadanos de Flesinga ya se habían rebelado. Primero, se negaron a dejar entrar a una guarnición española y habían ahorcado al ingeniero enviado por Alba para construir una ciudadela; luego, tras un breve lapso de indecisión, admitieron a los Mendigos del Mar. Felipe conocía de primera mano la importancia estratégica de esta pérdida: tanto él como su padre habían zarpado desde Flesinga a España en la década de 1550. «Convendrá», escribió oficiosamente en una posdata ológrafa a Alba,

> que si ya no ubiéredes castigado a esos desas islas, y los que están en ellas, lo hagáis luego sin dar tiempo a que les llegue otra ayuda, pues quanto esto más se dilatase, se dificultaría más el negocio; y que hecho esto, pongáis de manera lo de la isla de Valcheren [Walcheren] que no pueda suceder cosa semejante en ella, pues veis del inconveniente que podría ser.[524]

Alba apenas necesitaba aquella lección de estrategia, y sin duda habría tenido gran placer en «castigar a esos desas islas» porque, en aquel momento, pese a la llegada de refuerzos procedentes de Inglaterra y La Rochela, la revuelta todavía se hallaba localizada solo en Brielle y Flesinga. Sin embargo, a finales de mayo, el puerto de Enkhuizen, en el norte de Holanda, se declaró a favor de Guillermo de Orange y aceptó a una guarnición de los Mendigos, en tanto que un grupo de protestantes franceses tomó por sorpresa la ciudad de Mons, en Hainaut, protegida por poderosas fortificaciones. Más adelante, en junio, tropas alemanas lideradas por el cuñado de Orange capturaron la ciudad de Zutphen, en Güeldres; al mes siguiente, el propio Orange cruzó el Rin a la cabeza de un ejército de veinte mil hombres y comenzó a conquistar ciudades en Limburgo; y un ejército de seis mil protestantes franceses partieron de París con la intención de reforzar Mons. Pronto, cincuenta ciudades se habían puesto del lado de Orange.

Frente a tantas amenazas, el duque tomó una decisión crucial: dar prioridad absoluta a la reconquista de Mons, porque la ciudad podía servir de cabeza de puente para una invasión francesa a gran escala. De modo que Alba no solo se negó a enviar refuerzos a sus subordinados de las provincias del norte, enfrentados a serios apuros, sino que en lugar de ello trasladó a sus mejores tropas hacia el sur. Su apuesta empezó a dar resultado el 17 de julio, cuando sus tropas tendieron una emboscada a los protestantes franceses que se dirigían a reforzar Mons. Su comandante llevaba consigo unas cartas de Carlos IX de Francia en las que este recordaba a Orange que declararía la guerra a España en cuanto su hermana Margarita se hubiera casado con Enrique de Navarra. También Carlos había prometido a Coligny que podría invadir los Países Bajos con sus hugonotes, muchos de los cuales se encontraban en París para la boda, a partir del 25 de agosto. Aunque la boda se celebró sin incidentes, un francotirador católico trató de asesinar a Coligny, causándole una grave herida. Temiendo que el atentado provocara una reacción violenta de los protestantes en su capital, Carlos no hizo nada por impedir —e incluso puede que alentara— una matanza llevada a cabo por los católicos de París que se cobraría la vida de Coligny y los otros hugonotes en la ciudad el 24 de agosto, día de San Bartolomé. Esta masacre de la población protestante fue seguida por otras en una docena de ciudades francesas.

Estos acontecimientos alteraron la situación en los Países Bajos. Como apuntó Morillon, «si Dios no hubiera permitido la destrucción de Coligny y de sus seguidores, este país se habría perdido»; y el príncipe de Orange estuvo de acuerdo. La matanza, escribió a su hermano, era «un duro golpe» porque «mi única esperanza está en Francia». Si para San Bartolomé «hubiéramos vencido al duque de Alba, habríamos podido imponerle las condiciones según nuestra voluntad». Felipe

estaba de acuerdo. Cuando recibió «la buena nueva del castigo que se hizo en la persona del almirante [Coligny] y en los otros hereges de su secta y parçialdad», acudió a la iglesia de San Jerónimo a celebrarlo, y ordenó a su secretario sacar «de una carta de francés los nombres de los muertos en París». Alba también se alegró mucho al enterarse de los «maravillosos acontecimientos de París y Francia», pues suponía la caída de Mons, que sucedió algunos días más tarde.[525]

Ahora, con el peligro de Francia neutralizado, el duque tenía por fin las manos libres para recuperar el control de todos los Países Bajos. Optó por una estrategia de brutalidad selectiva contra determinadas ciudades rebeldes, contando con que unos pocos ejemplos de terror acelerarían el proceso de pacificación. Al principio, esta política obtuvo resultados espectaculares. Las tropas de Alba arrasaron Malinas (Mechelen), que había acogido con agrado a las tropas de Orange, y la saquearon durante tres días. Incluso antes de que dejaran de oírse los gritos, las demás ciudades rebeldes de Flandes y Brabante se apresuraron a rendirse. Luego, el duque y sus tropas avanzaron hacia Zutphen, que (al igual que Malinas) se había entregado a los rebeldes, y la tomaron por asalto y la saquearon. Una vez más, la política del terror estratégico dio resultado: Alba informó orgulloso al rey de que «Güeldres y Overyssel se han conquistado con la presa de Zutphaín [Zutphen] y el terror que con aquello se les ha puesto; y estas provincias todas están a la obediencia de Vuestra Magestad». Por fin Alba era libre para castigar a Holanda y Zelanda, y resolvió utilizar de ejemplo a otra ciudad rebelada, a fin de promover la rendición de las demás. A principios de diciembre, Naarden rehusó rendirse cuando se le pidió que lo hiciera y, según las propias palabras del duque, «la infantería española les ganó la muralla y degollaron burgueses y soldados sin escaparse hombre naçido».[526] Casi inmediatamente, tal y como Alba había previsto,

llegaron al campamento enviados procedentes de Haarlem (el siguiente bastión rebelde), pero, en lugar de presentar su rendición incondicional, pidieron negociar. El duque se negó, exigiendo su capitulación inmediata y sin condiciones. De no ser así, tomarían la ciudad y la saquearían.

Esta decisión demostró ser fatídica. Por un lado, la causa rebelde había enraizado mucho más profundamente en Holanda y Zelanda que en las otras provincias. Haarlem, a diferencia de Malinas o Zutphen, contaba con un núcleo duro de leales orangistas: estos se habían declarado espontáneamente a favor del príncipe, abierto sus puertas y permitido a un gran número de exiliados que volviesen y tomaran las riendas de la situación. Los nuevos gobernantes purgaron y reformaron el gobierno de la ciudad, cerraron las iglesias católicas y permitieron el culto calvinista, además de enviar delegados a los Estados provinciales de Holanda que iban a reunirse en nombre de Orange. Todos aquellos implicados en esta flagrante desobediencia a la autoridad del rey, tanto en política como en religión, sabían que no podían esperar ninguna misericordia si Alba conseguía restaurar el dominio español, y, en caso de que alguno lo dudara, no tenía más que pararse a considerar el destino corrido por Mons, Malinas, Zutphen y ahora Naarden. Por otro lado, llegado diciembre, las fuerzas españolas se habían debilitado mucho. El propio éxito de la campaña de Alba había reducido espectacularmente el tamaño de su ejército, debido tanto a las diversas acciones de la campaña, especialmente los asedios de Mons y Zutphen, que habían causado un número de bajas relativamente alto en la primera línea de combate, como a que cada ciudad reconquistada, ya fuera mediante la brutalidad o la clemencia, necesitaba una guarnición. Después de Naarden, el ejército real apenas disponía de 12.000 efectivos. Asediar Haarlem, que contaba con una guarnición de más de 3.000 hombres y sólidas fortificaciones, en pleno invierno,

parecía del todo imprudente.

La guerra de Flandes absorbía para entonces enormes sumas de dinero —casi dos millones de ducados en 1572— sin que se alcanzara a ver el final. El conflicto abierto en el Mediterráneo costaba casi lo mismo, y aún más en 1573, cuando la República de Venecia aceptó las condiciones otomanas que dos años antes había rechazado y firmó la paz. Esto precipitaba a Felipe a su peor pesadilla: una guerra a gran escala en dos frentes a la vez.

12. Años de adversidad, 1573-1576

«El mayor negocio y de mayor importancia que he tenido ni podré tener»

A principios de 1573, Felipe II perdió su confianza en la capacidad del duque de Alba para sofocar la rebelión de los Países Bajos y afirmó que encontrar una solución inmediata y permanente a la revuelta holandesa se había convertido en «el mayor negocio y de mayor importancia que he tenido ni podré tener». Por eso, en enero comunicó a don Luis de Requesens, su antiguo paje principal y entonces gobernador de Lombardía, que le había elegido como sucesor de Alba para acabar con la guerra en los Países Bajos «por moderación y clemencia».[527] Un mes más tarde, Felipe se enteró de que la República de Venecia había firmado una paz por separado con el sultán, dejándole prácticamente solo para resistir las incursiones otomanas en el Mediterráneo. Sin esperar la llegada de Requesens, ordenó a Alba que terminase la guerra en Holanda lo antes posible, prácticamente bajo cualquier condición. Aunque se alegraba mucho de sus victorias,

> importa tanto que todo ello se abrevie, assí por no se acaben de perder y destruyr essos [e]stados, como por la impossibilidad a que se a llegado en la provisión del dinero. Os ruego y encargo muy encarecidamente lo dispongáis de suerte que se ganen días, oras y aún momentos en lo que se huviere de hazer para venir a este fin.

Y le advertía de que conseguir dinero para la guerra causaría «daños de la hazienda que vienen a costar un ojo».[528]

Como de costumbre, la insistencia del rey en un cambio radical de la política a más de mil kilómetros de distancia demostró ser nada realista. El correo portador de la noticia llegó a los Países Bajos solamente seis semanas más tarde —mucho después de la caída de Haarlem, que podría haber proporcionado una admirable oportunidad para la clemencia

—, y, para entonces, el ejército español había comenzado el sitio de Alkmaar, una ciudad del norte de Holanda fuertemente fortificada. «No téngolo por negocio dificultoso», alardeó el duque, y de hecho muchos de los habitantes de la ciudad se inclinaban al principio por la rendición; pero el duque insistió una vez más en la rendición incondicional, y cuando su artillería seguía sin conseguir abrir brecha en las murallas, y los tercios españoles se negaron a lanzarse al asalto, ordenó la retirada. Fue la primera ciudad rebelde en salir victoriosa de un desafío a Felipe.[529]

El rey no sabía qué hacer. En una de sus enrevesadas cartas ológrafas en las que suplicaba a Requesens que fuera a los Países Bajos, resumía los contradictorios argumentos de sus ministros en esta materia. Alba y sus partidarios seguían considerando que la revuelta tenía un marcado carácter religioso y, por tanto, era imposible solventarla mediante un mutuo acuerdo. Pero la mayoría de los flamencos leales «van por todo lo contrario desto y dizen que los menos [se han rebelado] por lo de la religión, sino por el mal tratamiento que se les ha hecho en todo, principalmente por la gente de guerra y más que por todo por lo del décimo dinero». De modo que estos sostenían «que el remedio de todo es la blandura y el buen tratamiento» ¿Quién tenía razón? El rey confesaba que

> en tanta diferencia de pareceres yo me he hallado bien confuso, y ansý como no sé la verdad de lo que aý pasa, no sé el remedio que conviene dar a lo de aý ni qué creer; y paréceme lo más cierto no creer a los unos ni a los otros, que creo que van por los estremos. Y creo que sería lo mejor tomar el medio, aunque con toda disimulación.[530]

Para hacer frente a estas opiniones tan divergentes, Felipe mandó redactar dos instrucciones contradictorias para Requesens: «Veréys por las instrucciones que agora se os embían», le advirtió, «que la de castellano parece que tira al un camino algo, y la de francés muy claramente a lo otro». Se disculpaba a continuación por las dificultades que esta

contradicción podía causar, pero concluía débilmente: «Yo no me he querido quebrar la cabeza en enmendarlas, sino en poco, porque la verdadera instrucción será lo que vos viéredes aý y entendiéredes, y ansý os governad conforme a lo que aquí digo en lo que os pareciere convenir».[531]

Poco después de que Requesens llegara a Bruselas en noviembre de 1573 y comenzara a «ver y entender», informó a su amo:

> Ninguna dubda ay que, si estos estados se pudiessen aquietar solo con las armas y fuerzas, esto sería lo más conveniente al servicio de dios y de Vuestra Magestad, y muy mayor reputación, pues les podrá Vuestra Magestad dar las leyes que quisiesse, y sería muy más estimada su clemencia, usándose en aquel tiempo.

Pero, continuaba, «yo veo esta rebelión en los peores términos que nunca estuvo», con el estancamiento militar, las enormes deudas a las tropas, un presupuesto insostenible y el riesgo de más motines. España no podía seguir enfrentándose a la rebelión de esta manera. Aunque admitía que «nadie puede saber de cierto el successo que tendrá el publicarse el perdón general», Requesens proponía una elocuente comparación. Tres años antes, Felipe había iniciado pláticas «con los moros de Granada, no estando lo de allí en el aprieto que esta está» y había decidido en consecuencia abrir el camino a la paz. Requesens sugería que meter a todos los rebeldes en el mismo saco ocultaba una importante verdad: aunque «al príncipe de Orange y a muchos de las cabezas que le siguen fue el principio la religión, y aun es agora; pero en la generalidad del pueblo no creo que ha sido esta, sino las imposiciones que han tenido y el mal tratamiento que han padecido de la gente de guerra». Por tanto, recomendaba que se emitiera un perdón para todos aquellos que se mostraran dispuestos a vivir como católicos bajo el mando de Felipe, y pedía al rey su inmediata aprobación.[532]

La carta llegó a Madrid el 16 de enero de 1574, y Felipe pidió a su Consejo de Estado que debatiera «si en esta sazón se

deuía embiar el perdón general, y en qué forma, y con qué cláusulas», así como si se debían abrir o no negociaciones directas con el príncipe de Orange. Un ministro recordaba a sus colegas que «quando se quisiesse lleuar por rigor, duraría la guerra más de lo que se piensa», una clara crítica a las reiteradas reivindicaciones de Alba de que la victoria definitiva se hallaba a la vuelta de la esquina. El Consejo de Estado concluyó «que deuía yr el perdón», que se «ha de soltar Vuestra Magestad la décima y quitar el Consejo de Trublas, que tanto aborrecen todos los de aquellos estados». Al igual que Requesens, establecieron algunos elocuentes paralelismos. Un ministro experimentado afirmó que los flamencos «en sus libertades son como aragoneses», de manera que el rey debía «[reducir] el gobierno a lo antiguo» y abolir los cambios constitucionales introducidos por Alba. Otros recordaron a las Comunidades de Castilla, sugiriendo que el rey debía comunicar todas sus concesiones —tanto la abolición de los odiados impuestos y del Consejo de Trublas como el perdón general— al mismo tiempo, «como se hizo en Valladolid en el [caso] de las Comunidades» en 1522. Por último, el Consejo de Estado recomendaba que se concedieran facultades discrecionales a Requesens, «pues él que está presente, y sabrá por horas lo que se haze, verá mejor lo que conuiene al servicio y auctoridad de Vuestra Magestad».[533]

En vista de tal unanimidad entre sus consejeros, tanto en Madrid como en Bruselas, en mayo de 1574 Felipe envió a Requesens permiso para abolir los nuevos impuestos y el Consejo de Trublas, además de cuatro versiones distintas de un perdón general, que debería promulgar de la forma que él estimara más conveniente. En junio de 1574 Requesens promulgó, como el propio rey anotaba, «lo que se hizo a imitación del de las Comunidades de Castilla». Tan solo excluyó de este perdón a 144 personas.[534]

Una vez más, los Países Bajos o el Mediterráneo

¿Por qué no acabaron estas concesiones con la rebelión de los Países Bajos cuando otras similares sí habían terminado con las Comunidades cincuenta años antes? Desde Italia, el cardenal Granvela puso el dedo en la llaga: la razón era el recelo. «Conozco el umor de la tierra», escribió a Requesens, y estaba convencido de que «muchos [flamencos] han peccado por flaqueza, otros por miedo, y otros por haver sido forçados», y sería difícil «quitar la sombra y sospecha de que se quiera de nuevo entrar a processos y execuciones». De veras, «que aunque viene Christo a governarlos, no dexaran de murmurar y de decir lo que se les antojara». En Madrid, un consejero de Estado recordó al rey otro problema fundamental con el perdón general: «Con estas gracias ha de yr la prouisión del dinero, porque si se mostrasse flaqueza en lo de las armas, se creería que Vuestra Magestad concedía las gracias por más no poder». Requesens comandaba 60.000 hombres, que «suficiente número de gente es para conquistar muchos reinos, pero no lo es para allanar tan grandes herejías y malas voluntades como hay en todas las villas rebeladas». No obstante, Felipe tenía que seguir pagando a aquellos 60.000 hombres, aparte del dinero requerido para la defensa del Mediterráneo y todas las demás necesidades de la monarquía.[535]

Para el duque de Alba, la solución a este dilema financiero consistía en reducir la guerra en el Mediterráneo a la defensa para que Felipe pudiera concentrar todos sus recursos en la guerra de los Países Bajos, pero el rey no estaba de acuerdo. «El Turco se halla más armado que otros años, y tan irritado contra mí», explicaba. Entonces, en lugar de esperar el inevitable ataque del sultán y después tratar de responder, no solo sería más eficaz, sino también más barato, llevar «adelante la jornada, como está acordado, con que se sostiene la reputación y se

tienen en freno el Turco, Francia y potentados de Italia que por ventura, afloxando, se atreverían algunos a mover lo que agora no se piensa». Por otra parte, continuaba, si abandonaba la jornada a esta altura, «perderíanse 800.000 escudos o poco menos que ya están gastados». En cambio, con unos pocos escudos más, don Juan de Austria y su flota podrían alcanzar algún éxito importante.

Felipe cambió de opinión al mes siguiente cuando llegaron noticias de que Venecia había firmado el acuerdo unilateral con los turcos. El rey envió agentes a Estambul con poderes para solicitar una tregua también, tal y como Alba había sugerido. El embajador francés en Estambul no albergaba ninguna duda de que el motivo de esta decisión era «el claro deseo y la necesidad de España de un acuerdo [en el Mediterráneo] para poder acabar con los problemas en los Países Bajos» e hizo todo lo posible para impedirlo.[536] No tenía que haberse molestado. En octubre, don Juan lanzó un ataque sorpresa simultáneo contra Túnez y Bizerta, conquistando ambas plazas. La llegada de esta noticia a Estambul puso un final abrupto a cualquier negociación de tregua.

El rey reconocía el extremo peligro de la situación. Cuando en abril de 1574 don Juan pedía permiso para «salir con el armada para inpedir, en quanto se pueda, los efetos de la del enemigo adonde quiça se ganara más honra», Felipe rehusó. Al contrario, «lo que Su Magestad me escrive y me hordena es que asista en Milán hasta que me mande otra cosa para dar cuydado de allí a los vezinos y proveer a Flandes de gente, y a otros efetos tales, encargándome la inteligencia de todo lo que toca a guerra».[537] La primera «inteligencia» llegó ese mismo mes, de los Países Bajos, que Luis de Nassau, hermano de Orange, invadió con un ejército reclutado en Alemania. Al principio, el destino sonrió a Felipe: los veteranos españoles enviados por Requesens para interceptar a los invasores les derrotaron de

forma aplastante en la batalla de Mook. Pero, luego, los victoriosos tercios se amotinaron y entraron en Amberes, que ocuparon durante seis semanas hasta recibir la totalidad de sus pagas, que sumaban más de 500.000 ducados.

Requesens se apercibió enseguida de las perniciosas consecuencias del motín. Como se quejaba a un colega, «que no havía perdido el príncipe de Oranges los estados [de Flandes], sino los soldados nacidos en Valladolid y en Toledo, porque los de Amberes amotinados havían hecho huyr al dinero y perdido el crédito y la reputación […]. Fue plática de casi tres horas». Con mayor brevedad, Requesens le expuso al rey que aun cuando los flamencos antes habían querido a los españoles «como a sus hijos, y no fuera el pecado original del payś el tenernos odio, bastarían tantos motines como veen de nuestra nación, y el daño que dellos les resultan, para aborrescernos». En Italia, Granvela emitió la sombría predicción de que «aquellos estados, si porfiamos y no les ganamos la voluntad, ruynarán los reynos de Su M[agesta]d, y su reputación».[538]

Mientras tanto, Requesens buscaba una meta para «los soldados nacidos en Valladolid y Toledo» y concluía (acertadamente) que la toma de Leiden debilitaría en grado sumo la rebelión, dado que separaría a los rebeldes del norte de Holanda de los de Zelanda. Leiden no disponía de defensas avanzadas como Alkmaar y, aunque abrió sus diques, los españoles consiguieron aislar la ciudad del mundo exterior mediante una cadena de pequeños fortines. Sin embargo, a finales de septiembre, cuando la ciudad estaba dispuesta a rendirse por hambre, Orange dio orden de abrir más diques con intención de enviar una flota de barcazas; no lo consiguió, pero, al ver que las aguas se elevaban, «ocupó a la infantería española un tan grande y repentino miedo» que los soldados abandonaron sus fuertes y huyeron.[539] Otra ciudad rebelde había salido victoriosa de un desafío a Felipe.

Estrategias alternativas: ¿quemar, anegar o dominio del mar?

El socorro de Leiden frustró cualquier esperanza de que se pudiera acabar con la revuelta holandesa por los medios convencionales, y Requesens propuso a su amo «que pues la porfia y rebelión de los de Holanda passa tan adelante, le paresçia se deuerían quemar y assolar todos los villages y platpais del Waterland», el área del norte de Holanda que alimentaba a las ciudades rebeldes. También apoyaba ante el rey la sugerencia de uno de sus lugartenientes de que «siempre que fuese servido de anegar este país, está en su mano. Y pues ellos han dado principio a lo hacer, si perseberan en su obstinada rebelión bien merescen ser anegados».[540] Felipe consideraba a menudo ambas estrategias indirectas: quemar y anegar. «Está muy claro», contestó a Requesens, «que la dureza, maldad y obstinación de los dichos rebeldes ha llegado a términos que nadie puede dubdar ser dignos de riguroso y exemplar castigo». Recordaba que el duque de Alba había sugerido «assolarlos», dado que esta era una práctica militar habitual en territorio enemigo, y «a ser la tierra de otro príncipe, el duque lo hiziera sin consultármelo, y fuera ello muy bien hecho. Pero detúvole el ser mía, como era razón, y a mí también para no se lo mandar». Pero ahora, al ver que la rebelión continuaba,

> teniendo por sin dubda que deue ser esta la voluntad de Dios (cuya yra tienen tan meresçida), en fin ha parescido convenir que se venga a usar del último y riguroso castigo. Que se presupone se les dar en una de dos formas: o anegando los dichos villages y platpais, o quemándolos.

¿Cuál de las dos debía llevar a cabo Requesens? En este punto, la opinión del rey era clara:

> El anegar Holanda se podría hazer fácilmente, rompiendo los diques, pero este medio trae consigo un grande inconveniente, que rompidos una vez, ha de quedar pérdida y assolada para siempre, en evidente daño de los estados [provincias] vezinos. Pues, bien mirado, se puede dezir que la Holanda es agora

como dique de todos ellos, y que anegándola, quedarían en manifiesto peligro, y necessitados a hazerse en ellos sus diques; y antes que se hiziessen, se perderían indubitadamente […]. De manera que en effecto no conviene usar deste medio, ni se deve hazer, porque (demás de los inconvenientes que están tocados, que son manifiestos y tan grandes) se considera que traería consigo un cierto nombre de crueldad, que se deve huyr, y mayormente con vassallos, por más que su culpa sea notoria y el castigo que se les diesse justificado.

De modo que, proseguía Felipe,

por estas y algunas otras consideraciones, se tiene por mejor el del fuego, porque (demás de ser el que se suele usar en los negocios de guerra) se puede atajar quando se quiere y, quando bien se viniesse a abrasar todos los pueblos […]. Y assí se podía esperar que se vernían a rendir de suyo, por no morir de hambre.

Pero, una vez más, el rey se abstenía de dar una orden directa: «Esto es lo que occurre, y a lo que yo más me inclino; pero vos, que tenéis el negocio presente, haréis lo que viéredes más convenir a mi servicio, y a la buena dirección de lo que tenéis entre manos».[541]

Pero las manos de Requesens ya estaban atadas. Anticipando una decisión favorable, algunas tropas españolas habían entrado en territorio rebelde para romper unos cuantos diques e incendiar algunas granjas. Más tarde, los tercios amenazaron a Requesens con que, a menos que se les pagaran sus atrasos antes de diez días, abandonarían sus puestos. Sobra decir que no se podía encontrar ni dinero ni tropas de reemplazo a tiempo, y, en diciembre de 1574, todas las guarniciones españolas abandonaron el norte de Holanda. Jamás regresarían.

Aunque ninguna de estas dos estrategias indirectas —quemar o anegar— consiguió acabar con la rebelión, el rey demostró un admirable rigor analítico al evaluar cada una de ellas. Muy distinto fue lo que ocurrió con una tercera iniciativa alternativa suya para derrotar a los rebeldes holandeses: la creación de una Armada atlántica. Como Requesens afirmaba a su señor, «desde el día que me encargué desta guerra» (y «como muchas vezes he escripto») era su opinión que «sin armada

dessos reinos [de España] no se puede acabar esta guerra». En la primavera de 1574 Felipe se decidió a actuar. Mandó embargar más de doscientos navíos mercantes en los puertos cantábricos y ordenó a Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, conquistador de La Florida, dotarlos de armamento y municiones «tanto para limpiar [de piratas] las costas occidentales del Canal, como para recuperar algunos puertos de los Países Bajos ocupados por los rebeldes». El rey también firmó órdenes para reclutar 11.000 soldados que sirviesen en esa flota.[542]

Estas órdenes revelan la falta de experiencia estratégica y operativa de Felipe. En primer lugar, dado que tardaba varios meses en localizar y cargar la artillería y demás equipamiento necesario para convertir un barco mercante en uno de guerra, Menéndez predijo que la creación de una flota adecuada «podría durar muchos años». Por otra parte, una vez en aguas del norte, una extensa Armada española necesitaría un puerto grande en el que protegerse, y Felipe ya no controlaba ninguno. Al final, cuando llegó a la corte la noticia de que una gran flota turca había salido de Estambul hacia el oeste, el rey mandó que Menéndez se quedase cerca de España con su flota, «para socorrer a la mayor necessidad» —el Atlántico o el Mediterráneo—, dependiendo de las circunstancias. Para empeorar la situación, una epidemia mató a gran parte de la fuerza expedicionaria, incluido Menéndez, y en septiembre de 1574 Felipe canceló toda la expedición. Había gastado más de 500.000 ducados sin fruto alguno.[543]

Entre la espada y la pared

A pesar de que sus otros reinos contribuían con sumas importantes, la mayor parte del presupuesto de Felipe destinado a ambos escenarios bélicos procedía de Castilla. Aunque las grandes cantidades de dinero que esta aportó para mantener a las fuerzas armadas en el extranjero eran enormes,

no fueron todo lo que el reino asumía: la Real Hacienda también pagaba los gastos de transporte y los intereses. Por ejemplo, en febrero de 1574, los oficiales de Hacienda calculaban que Castilla había gastado veintidós millones de ducados para la guerra en Flandes desde la salida del duque de Alba de la corte en 1567.[⇒]

Dado que tal sangría de fondos procedentes de España no podía continuar, Felipe decretó dos iniciativas. Primero, convocó a las Cortes de Castilla para que le ayudaran con nuevos impuestos, y, segundo, constituyó una junta secreta (más tarde conocida como la Junta de Presidentes) «para tratar los negocios principales de hacienda». Al principio el rey consideró presidir esta junta él mismo, porque le parecía que las «necesidades y el estado de la hazienda» estaban tan extremos que «no sé si lo pueden acabar de creer los que no lo veen»; pero, porque «mys ocupaciones ordinarias no dan lugar a que yo lo pueda hazer», lo encargó a Diego de Covarrubias, presidente del Consejo Real y, por ello, también de las Cortes. Felipe informó a Covarrubias de que una solución a la crisis financiera constituía «el negocio de mayor importancia que puede ser, pues yo creo que depende dél en mucha parte la conservación de la religión y de la cristiandad, y entiendo que esto me da harto más cuydado que me daría si me tocase a my solo». El rey temía que «está ya todo en términos que, si no se da y halla remedio, no puede dexar de caer muy presto» su monarquía; y creía que su salvación fiscal «consiste en tres puntos. El uno, lo del sostenimiento, auiendo ya tan poco como ay para sostener lo que es menester, o nada por mejor dezir. Lo otro, lo que toca a mercaderes de que corren cambios, para que estos çesen y no se venga ha acabar de consumir todo, como agora va. Lo otro, lo del desempeño», es decir, la redención de los juros y, por tanto, la liberación de los ingresos retenidos para devolver los intereses que pesaban sobre ellos.

Para Felipe, «estos tres puntos se resumen» en uno: «Que se dé orden cómo la Hacienda Real pueda bastar para los gastos ordinarios y extraordinarios».[544]

La Junta de Presidentes estimó la deuda fija en al menos treinta y cinco millones de ducados y propuso a las Cortes un aumento en las alcabalas, cuyo cobro se volvería a permitir a las ciudades de Castilla durante un periodo de treinta años. A cambio, las ciudades pagarían una cantidad global anual, el llamado encabezamiento, por adelantado. Aunque los procuradores no descartaron estas propuestas, exigieron otras muchas concesiones: la supresión de todos los impuestos aplicados por la corona sin consentimiento de las Cortes; la restricción de la exportación de oro y plata en lingotes desde el reino; y la promesa de que el rey no enajenaría los ingresos liberados por el desempeño a los banqueros a cambio de nuevos préstamos. Cuando Felipe se negó a realizar algunas de estas concesiones, los procuradores declararon que necesitaban nuevas instrucciones de sus respectivos ayuntamientos, obligando al rey a suspender la asamblea.

La intransigencia de las Cortes de Castilla, junto a la muerte de varios consejeros de confianza (Feria en 1571, Espinosa en 1572, Ruy Gómez en 1573), posiblemente convenció a Felipe de que ya no podía manejar la situación financiera por sí solo y que necesitaba a alguien para hacerlo. En enero de 1574, escribió: «Pensando voy en dar algún remedio, que çierto es menester, y en qual será, que yo creo que no ay otro sino dar dueño a lo de la Hazienda, pues yo no lo puedo ser ni entiendo». Felipe eligió para este alto oficio a Juan de Ovando —presbítero, inquisidor y alumno de Espinosa—, quien, como presidente del Consejo de Indias, había racionalizado los esfuerzos de la corona por gobernar América.[545]

Ovando aplicó de inmediato su aguda inteligencia a los

asuntos pendientes y preparó una serie de documentos en los que analizaba los problemas financieros subyacentes de Castilla. Para empezar, proponía como reforma de urgencia la creación del Tribunal de la Hacienda, un nuevo organismo que debía supervisar todas las actividades fiscales de la corona y, como «dueño» de la Hacienda, se encargaría de informar directamente al rey, dinamizando de este modo tanto la elaboración como la puesta en práctica de las medidas que debieran adoptarse. A continuación, Ovando se centraba en los problemas fiscales concretos a los que se enfrentaba la corona, procurando hacerlo de forma que pudieran ser comprendidos incluso por un rey que decía no entender de la materia [véase lámina 36]. Lo hizo escribir todo con una caligrafía inusualmente grande y utilizando solo términos sencillos, como si se dirigiera a un niño pequeño, bajo el encabezamiento «Para nos entender y podernos valer de la Hazienda Real, es menester, tomándolo de raíz, considerar quatro cossas»:

1. «¿Qué es lo que tenemos?» Ovando calculaba que los ingresos anuales de la corona de Castilla ascendían a menos de seis millones de ducados.
2. «¿Qué es lo que debemos?» El total alcanzaba más de setenta y tres millones de ducados.
3. «¿Qué nos resta, falta y hemos menester?» Ovando apenas necesitaba afirmar lo obvio, pero, para educar a su rey, lo hizo: «Resta que nos devemos mucho más que tenemos de renta, y que nos falta todo lo que es menester». Entre los pagos imprescindibles destacó casi cien mil ducados al mes para la Casa Real y la defensa local; doscientos cincuenta mil más cada mes para el interés en juros; y un millón al mes para los «exércitos de mar y tierra que basten para refrenar y sujetar los enemigos turcos y

hereges». Ovando calculaba el total de los compromisos en casi cincuenta millones de ducados, mientras que sus activos, según le recordaba a su señor, ascendían a menos de seis millones.

4. «¿De dónde y cómo lo proveeremos?» Sorprendentemente, Ovando no sugería una reducción del gasto destinado a «refrenar y sujetar los enemigos turcos y hereges, porque es cierto que sino los sujetamos que nos han de sujetar». En cambio, proponía dos formas de encontrar los fondos para ambas guerras: aumentar los ingresos y reducir los pagos a los asentistas, es decir, a sus acreedores, principalmente banqueros y hombres de negocios. Para lo primero, se mostraba partidario de más incrementos y ampliaciones en el encabezamiento de las alcabalas (algunos de los nuevos impuestos, como el desempeño, se utilizarían para amortizar la deuda pública), así como de incautar todo el oro y la plata que llegara en las próximas flotas procedentes de América, fuesen destinados a particulares o a pagar a los acreedores de la corona. Para reducir el pago de la deuda, recomendaba no solo bajar unilateralmente el tipo de interés sobre los juros existentes, sino también emitir un decreto de suspensión de pagos que confiscaría tanto el capital como los intereses acumulados en todos los asientos firmados con banqueros desde 1560, obligando a los asentistas a aceptar nuevos juros como amortización. Ovando insistía en que estas tres medidas debían entrar en vigor simultáneamente: las Cortes incrementarían el encabezamiento en el mismo momento en que el rey emitiera el decreto y sus funcionarios en Sevilla confiscaran el tesoro.[546]

Mientras Felipe esperaba el plan de su nuevo presidente, lanzó una ofensiva para ganar ayuda divina. En marzo de 1574, cuando recibió noticias tanto de la invasión de Luis de Nassau en los Países Bajos como de la llegada de una enorme flota turca para vengar la pérdida de Túnez y Bizerta, Felipe instó a los clérigos de Castilla a rezar por un milagro, pues resultaba «tan necesario, como tenéis entendido. Y con esto espero en su [divina] misericordia que la tendrá de nosotros, pues es suya la causa, y serlo, y lo que se pierde de su servicio y religión, es lo que más pena me da en estos negocios y cuydado». También pensaba en revisar su testamento, pues aunque «espero que Dios dará vida y salud, pues se guíen por su servicio, mas bien es estar prevenido, y si las cosas van adelante tan mal como andan…»; el rey tachó el resto de esta frase, una acción poco frecuente en su correspondencia.[547]

La noticia de la toma de Amberes por los españoles amotinados no hizo sino aumentar la desesperación del rey a mediados de mayo:

> Cierto si no es haziendo Dios mylagros, lo que no merecen nuestros pecados, no es posible sostenernos, ya no digo años sino meses; ni ay vida ni salud que pueda durar con el cuydado que desto se tiene y de pensar lo que puede suceder dello, y que sea en my tiempo.

Dos días después, se lamentaba de que «son cosas que no pueden dexar de dar cuydado y traerme muy desasosegado» y «he myedo no venga primero el daño que el remedio (si ya no es venido)». Pasadas dos semanas, el rey llegaba de nuevo a la conclusión de que solo la intervención divina podía salvarle. «Oy he acabado de ver los despachos de Flandes», se quejaba a Mateo Vázquez: «Creo que es ya llegada la hora que yo he temydo siempre en que me avía de ver por falta del dinero. Y no creo que puede ya aver remedio en tiempo sino es de Dios, que lo puede todo, como lo espero en él. Y esto me sostiene, aunque creo que no se lo merecemos». A finales de mayo,

incluso aquellas débiles esperanzas se habían desvanecido:

> Temo yo que no aviendo allá [en Flandes] dinero, no querren [los rebeldes] concierto ni nada, teniendo por tan cierta como en este caso se podría tener la perdición de aquello, y aun de lo demás [de la Monarquía], aunque espero en Dios que no lo permytirá ni quiera, por el daño que será de su servicio, ya que nosotros no lo merezcamos. Mas es fuerte cosa y se sombra cada día en tal punto. [548]

Cuando en junio de 1574 llegaron más malas noticias de Flandes, Felipe repitió: «Creo que todo es tiempo perdido según cómo va lo de Flandes, que perdido aquello poco durará lo demás [de la Monarquía], aunque aya dinero». Al mes siguiente, opinaba de nuevo:

> Cierto aquello [Flandes] está muy aventurado, con tanta gente y sin dinero, y así es menester socorrerlo dél con gran brevedad; y sin él se imposibilitan más los conciertos y no puede tener remedio lo de allí, si Dios no haze mylagro, sin dinero. Lo que se trata no puede ser tan brevemente concluydo que no se pierda antes lo de Flandes, y perdido aquello no bastarán quantos millones acá tengamos para que también se dexe de perder quanto más.

Pero, al no materializarse ni el «mylagro» ni el dinero, el rey suspiraba: «Creo que se a de acabar antes lo de Flandes por falta del dinero, como yo lo he temydo siempre. No ay que pensar allá que nadie a de tener secreto, pero poco importara si los enemygos tuvieran necesidad; pero como somos nosotros los que la tenemos, y ellos lo conocen claro, está que no han de querrer concierto». Concluía desanimado: «En fin todas las cosas nos van faltando y tan a priesa que no sé qué me diga dello».[549]

Resulta notable la tendencia de Felipe a escribir la misma cosa tantas veces (tratándose, como aquí, de quejas dirigidas a un mismo ministro, Mateo Vázquez), y siguió haciéndolo cuando las Cortes rehusaron tanto la propuesta de un decreto que redujese los pagos a los acreedores de la corona como la demanda para aumentar el encabezamiento de las alcabalas a dos millones y medio de ducados anuales, alegando (con razón, como luego se demostró) que los contribuyentes de sus

ciudades no podían soportar semejante carga. Entonces llegaron noticias de nuevos fracasos tanto en el Mediterráneo como en los Países Bajos. Una flota turca forzaba la rendición primero de Túnez (agosto) y luego de La Goleta, la fortaleza que controlaba el acceso a Túnez por mar (septiembre), mientras que los rebeldes socorrían Leiden (octubre). Ante estos tres desastres, las Cortes dieron su consentimiento provisional al aumento en el encabezamiento el 16 de noviembre de 1574.

Sin embargo, la depresión del rey se agravó hasta el punto de que quería morir. En diciembre contestó a un billete con la advertencia de que «oy estoy de muy ruin humor para nada», circunstancia que no mejoró tras conocer el descontento causado en algunas ciudades de Castilla por el aumento de las alcabalas, «y así boy temyendo mucho el negocio de qué depende el remedio de todo, si le puede ya aver, que en verdad creo que no; y que vaya todo muy al cabo. Y ojalá lo fuese yo por no ver lo que temo». Luego, cuando abrió otras cartas dirigidas «al rey en su mano», exclamó: «De ninguna parte ni por ninguna vía me viene cosa que no sea desta manera», y añadía, «si no fuere antes el fin del mundo, que creo que anda muy cerca de ser; y ojalá fuese el de todo el mundo y no el de la christiandad».[550]

El camino hasta el fracaso

En lugar del Apocalipsis, el nuevo año le trajo otro fastidio: su medio hermano. Cuando se enteraba de que la Armada turca había salido de Estambul, don Juan desobedeció las órdenes expresas de Felipe de quedarse en Milán. Como confesaba a Margarita de Parma, su medio hermana y confidente: «Todo va, Señora, en peligroso estado; y en verdad que no es en parte toda la culpa de Su Magestad, sino en consentir que goviernan sus Estados que no tengan por tan suyo el vezino y el que no lo es, como el que es a cargo de cada ministro». Don Juan se

enfadó de que «se gasta el dinero, que tanto se mira por él, sin tiempo, sin sazón y sin otro fruto que mal gastarle», y se preparaba para desobedecer a su hermano de nuevo: «Yo cierto, sin más detenerme, pasaré luego a España que es el punto a que agora tengo puesta la mira».[551]

En un billete escrito poco después de la llegada inesperada de don Juan, Felipe protestaba: «Traenme la cabeça tan llena de cosas y de pesadumbres los que más lo avrían de desviar que cierto no ando en my. Y todo es poner temores y inconvenientes, ¡como si yo no los entendiese!, y no darme remedio para ellos, como si yo fuese Dios que le pudiese dar». Y continuaba, «my hermano vino después a decirme que no se proveýa nada [para la Armada], aunque no hechaba la culpa a nadie. Pero yo estaba un poco mohino del negocio, y le respondí que no se proveýa porque no le avía, y que no se podía hazer lo imposible». Entonces, «estando escribiendo esto, me han dado ese pliego de Juan de Ovando y ¡myrad que cabeça tendré yo agora para responderle!, aunque creo que abía algunas cosas a que fuera menester. Pero no puedo».[552] Felipe se dio por vencido.

En marzo de 1575 al «dueño» de la Hacienda, que desde su nombramiento había sufrido esta combinación de dilación seguida por órdenes perentorias e imprecisas a la vez, se le acabó la paciencia. Ovando envió al rey un devastador análisis de lo mal que había gestionado sus propias finanzas. En primer lugar, enumeraba sus propios logros: «Aunque el [e]stado de la Hacienda estava en punto desesperado», él acababa de reunir y enviar «un millón [de ducados] para Flandes, y más de medio» millón para la Armada del fallecido Pedro Menéndez, «y 960.000 escudos para Italia». Además, había conseguido préstamos por más de dos millones para las campañas del año corriente. Ovando comparaba después estos logros concretos con la ineficacia del rey, «por no fiar de mi ni de todos los

ministros de hacienda», y a continuación enumeraba algunas de las propuestas —«se pudiera aver puesto el remedio en todo con aver ordenado el Tribunal [de Hacienda]; o con aver tratado de la execución de la provisión que yo ordené»— que Felipe había rechazado. Ovando también se quejaba de los asentistas y del constante aumento en la tasa de interés que demandaban: los mismos banqueros que en la década de 1560 habían concedido préstamos al ocho por ciento anual, exigían ahora el dieciséis por ciento, e incluso más. Por eso, el presidente recalcaba que solo un decreto de suspensión podía acabar con este círculo vicioso.[553]

Entonces, llegó a Madrid la noticia de que la flota otomana estaba a punto de empezar una nueva campaña en el Mediterráneo occidental. Felipe tenía que iniciar enseguida el proceso de movilización para defenderse, y pasó las semanas siguientes organizando la jornada tanto en el Mediterráneo como en los Países Bajos. Al igual que el año anterior, se decidió que su flota tendría que mantener una postura defensiva, y sus instrucciones a don Juan precisaban que, aun en ausencia de la flota otomana, solo permitiría un ataque contra Túnez y Bizerta con la meta de destruirlas totalmente; en ningún caso debería ocuparlas de nuevo y hacer prisioneros. Y si la flota otomana atacara a los venecianos, don Juan podría «darles socorro» solamente si tenía gran ventaja numérica: de otra manera, debería dejar a sus antiguos aliados luchar en solitario. Felipe también aprobó una postura defensiva en Flandes: una conferencia formal con los rebeldes para acabar con la guerra. El rey autorizó con antelación varias concesiones políticas de importancia, incluida la restitución de prácticamente todas las propiedades confiscadas por el Consejo de Trublas; solo vetó cualquier discusión acerca de la tolerancia religiosa.

Tantos debates y decisiones difíciles dejaron al rey

exhausto. Don Juan de Austria envió a Margarita de Parma un retrato revelador de cómo se encontraba Felipe en la primavera de 1575:

> Dexé a Su Magestad bueno, gracias a Nuestro Señor, pero tan fatigado de negocios que demás de vérselo ya en el rostro y canas es mucho de temerlo. Las nuevas que de nuestra corte podré dar a Vuestra Alteza son cierto poco buenas, porque como no tiene Su Magestad con quien descansar, anda cada uno lleno de confusión y nuestro amo de fatiga, y los negocios sin el espediente que otras vezes.

No exageraba: poco después de la salida de su hermano, Felipe confesó que se sentía «tan cansado» que «cierto yo no sé cómo vibo».[554]

En los Países Bajos, delegados de Felipe y de Orange se reunían en la ciudad de Breda en marzo de 1575. Nada más comenzar las conversaciones, Requesens comentó que ya «anda un lenguaje por todo el payś que ha de aver una rebolución general si no nos concertamos con ellos», pero confesó que «no tengo ninguna sperança de que nos concertamos, porque en lo de la religión no les hemos de conceder nada de lo que nos pidieron». Las doce semanas de debate en Breda demostraron que Requesens estaba en lo cierto. Cuando en julio se rompieron las conversaciones, escribió irónico: «Si se tratara de hazer una paz que dependiera el efecto della de dar quatro villas o quatro reynos, más o menos», seguramente se habría alcanzado un acuerdo; «pero dependiendo desta la religión», la paz era ideológicamente inaceptable. Sin embargo, el hecho seguía siendo que resultaba imposible ganar la guerra, «teniendo la deuda a cuestas, y la gente [de guerra] dentro de los payses sin poderla despedir sin pagarla ni entretenerla sin mucho dinero. No sé cómo se pueden encaminar las cosas a este propósito».[555]

La Conferencia de Breda demostró ser un error que le saldría muy caro al rey. Para empezar, fortaleció a los holandeses: al aceptar la celebración de las conversaciones,

Felipe confería a sus rebeldes cierto grado de reconocimiento, al mismo tiempo que la experiencia de esta negociación colectiva aumentó su cohesión interna. Luego, debilitó a España: a pesar de que se habían suspendido las hostilidades durante los tres meses de infructuosas conversaciones, los soldados del rey continuaban devengando un sueldo aunque no lucharan. Por último, hacía absurda la decisión, tomada en diciembre de 1574, de que emitiría un decreto de suspensión de pagos solo en septiembre siguiente, un retraso de nueve meses destinado expresamente a permitir que Requesens organizara otra campaña más para aplastar la rebelión por la fuerza. Por supuesto, la demora del comienzo de las operaciones en tres meses para poder mantener unas conversaciones de paz frustradas también arruinó esta posibilidad.

A pesar de todo, el rey se ciñó a su agenda original. En mayo de 1575, Felipe admitió que «yo no dudo de que, si uviese de durar el gasto de allí como agora va, no se podría llevar adelante», pero, continuó, «es gran lástima que, aviéndose gastado tanto, y ofreçiéndose ocasiones que con poco más podría ser remediarse todo, los ayamos de perder», el argumento clásico de una superpotencia con problemas. Cuando Mateo Vázquez anotó con aprobación la sugerencia de Requesens de que «si lo del no baxar el Turco fuese verdad», después puede «yr allá el señor don Juan con toda la fuerza» disponible a Flandes, Felipe se hundió en la autocompasión:

> A my no me quadra mucho esto, por muchas causas que se me ofrecen a ello. Y allí no tenemos falta de gente (antes sobra), sino de dinero y ser superiores en la mar; y aquello no sería sino en la tierra y acrecentar mucho el gasto. Y quedaría lo de Italia perdido para si otro año viene la armada del turco, que desde este es menester irlo proveniendo. En fin, ay tantas y tales cosas, que yo no sé cómo se vibe una hora en ellas.[556]

Finalmente, el 1 de septiembre de 1575, Felipe firmó dos documentos: en uno congelaba todos los asientos pendientes y cancelaba todos los pagos a los asentistas, por un valor total de

entre quince y veinte millones de ducados (había varios tanteos); en otro ordenaba la rigurosa auditoría de trescientos asientos realizados desde 1560 para averiguar si había habido fraude. Durante algunos días más, el rey mantuvo estas decisiones en secreto, pero (como explicó a su embajador en Génova, el domicilio de muchos de sus banqueros) finalmente no tuvo alternativa «porque por mucho secreto que en ello ha hauido, no ha podido ser tanto que no se haya venido a sospechar por los mercaderes algunas cosas, de que ha resultado tanto daño, y no querer negociar ni proveernos de ningún dinero». El 15 de septiembre, una semana después de la muerte de Ovando, impulsor de la iniciativa, se enviaron múltiples copias impresas del decreto a los «concejos, receptores y otras personas» de Castilla, con instrucciones de que dejaran de pagar «las consignaciones que tenemos dadas a los mercaderes y hombres de negocios a cuenta de assientos y cambios hechos o tomados con ellos» y «antes se cobre lo que aquello montare con lo demás para Nos, por entero».[557]

Al principio, Felipe era optimista. En las bóvedas del Alcázar de Madrid «se ha hecho un aposento, y puesto en él ciertas arcas fuertes con tres llaues diferentes […] en que se va metiendo todo el dinero que traen de diferentes partes destos reynos que procede de las dichas consignaciones». Pero los ministros del rey que conocían la situación de Flandes se daban cuenta de cuál era la realidad. Domingo de Zavala, un agente de Requesens en la corte, explicó con cansancio al rey que, a pesar de haber logrado enviar a Amberes una carta de crédito por 100.000 escudos, 150.000 en plata por el Atlántico y 100.000 más en oro a través de Italia, «todo no será entretenimiento aun para solo un mes, que será el presente de noviembre». Todo se perderá, continuaba Zavala, «si Vuestra Magestad, dexando todas las otras empresas y gastos que pudiese escusar, no acude a lo de allá con tanto fundamento y

cuidado […] para que lo que está en obediencia se conserve, y aquella guerra se abrevie, pues con alargarla se sigue tanta costa y corre tanto riesgo». En Amberes, el propio Requesens se mostró de acuerdo. Advirtió a su hermano en noviembre de 1575:

> El decreto de hazienda ha dado tan gran golpe en esta Bolsa que no ay hombre en ella con crédito, [y] yo sin ningún medio de hallar un solo real. Ni veo de cómo el rey lo pueda proveer, aunque tuviera muchos; y si no es por milagros se caerá toda esta máquina tan brevemente que será muy posible que no tenga lugar de [e]scrivirlo a Vuestra Señoría.[558]

Enviado a los Países Bajos a pesar de sus protestas y sin instrucciones claras, Requesens afirmó que el decreto le había roto el corazón. Y lo hizo, pues murió repentinamente el 5 de marzo de 1576. Tanto las provincias leales de los Países Bajos como los sesenta mil soldados del Ejército de Flandes quedaron bajo la autoridad del Consejo de Estado de Bruselas, compuesto por ministros nombrados por su docilidad más que por su capacidad de ganar una guerra, y mucho menos de manejar un ejército permanentemente al borde del motín.

Felipe quedó desolado. El decreto de suspensión de pagos fue un desastre para sus empresas extranjeras. «Por ello crea cierto que yo no salga de necesidad», lamentó en marzo de 1576, «sino que antes estoy en mayor por la falta de crédito y no poderme valer sino de puro dinero que no se junta tan a priesa como sería menester».[559] También había precipitado un desastre interno. Su principal asesor de finanzas aseguró a Felipe que «después que se publicó [el decreto] de tal manera ha faltado el crédito de todos los tratantes y quasi del todo ha cessado y está perdido el trato de todos los negocios» en Castilla, y que «ni de un lugar a otro, assí destos reynos como de fuera de ellos, se puede proveer partida grande ni pequeña de dinero, sino se embía de contado con mucha costa y riesgo». Además, Mateo Vázquez recordó al rey «la gran necessidad que padescen los pobres criados» de la Casa Real, «que quiebra el

coraçón ver algunos rotos y que estén para morir de hambre». La respuesta del rey mostró su desesperación: «Si Dios nos diese más tiempo, podríase acudir a estas cosas, pero con la falta que ay dél, no se puede todo», y creía «que qualquiera cosa será mejor que estar así suspenso todo».[560]

Felipe se equivocó: sí había «qualquiera cosa» peor. En julio de 1576 los veteranos españoles en Flandes, algunos de los cuales reclamaban hasta seis años de salario atrasado, se amotinaron de nuevo y lanzaron un ataque sorpresa sobre Aalst, situada a veinticinco kilómetros al oeste de Bruselas. Aunque esta ciudad siempre había permanecido leal a Felipe, los españoles la saquearon y después establecieron allí su cuartel general. La noticia de esta atrocidad causó la indignación general y, en un intento por restablecer la calma, el Consejo de Estado en los Países Bajos declaró a los amotinados de Aalst rebeldes ante Dios y el rey, a los que se podía dar muerte sin más.

El Consejo también autorizó a los que el gobierno llamaba «los XV Estados no rebelados» a reclutar tropas para defenderse contra los amotinados; pero, el 5 de septiembre, los soldados alistados por los Estados de Brabante interrumpieron una reunión del Consejo y arrestaron a sus miembros. Al día siguiente, se enviaron cartas en las que se convocaba a representantes de «los XV Estados no rebelados» para que se reunieran en Bruselas y autorizasen conversaciones con los Estados de Holanda y Zelanda sobre una tregua. Tres semanas más tarde, invitaron al príncipe de Orange y a sus aliados a enviar diputados a la ciudad de Gante, donde podrían negociar la paz utilizando como punto de partida los temas acordados en Breda el año anterior. Para finales de octubre de 1576, ya habían acordado los términos de una «pacificación» que pondría fin a todos los enfrentamientos entre las diferentes provincias, pero dejando para una reunión de todos los Estados

Generales la resolución de los problemas religiosos y políticos pendientes. Hasta que la Pacificación de Gante pudiera ser ratificada y las tropas españoles abandonaran aquellas tierras, los Estados rehusaron reconocer la autoridad del nuevo gobernador general nombrado por Felipe: don Juan de Austria.

13. La crisis del reinado, 1576-1577

La guerra nunca cesó en la monarquía de Felipe II durante los cincuenta y cinco años en que gobernó, salvo entre febrero y agosto de 1577. Poco antes, el rey había aceptado a regañadientes la necesidad de una tregua con el sultán otomano después de veinticinco años de guerra continuada: «Importa mucho concluir esta tregua», opinaba, «tanto que, sin ella, no sé cómo se podría ir adelante». También aceptaba, igualmente a regañadientes, que «salvando la religión y mi obediencia cuanto se puede», a sus vasallos rebeldes en los Países Bajos «se debe conceder lo que fuere menester para acabar y salvar lo que se pudiere» y obtener la paz después de cuatro años de la «guerra más sangrienta que se ha visto muchos años ha».[561] Las secuelas de estas dos iniciativas eran muy distintas. Los diplomáticos de Felipe y el sultán renovaron la tregua en varias ocasiones, así que la paz en el Mediterráneo perduró hasta el resto del siglo. En contraste, aunque la paz con los rebeldes flamencos fue llamada el Edicto Perpetuo, Felipe rechazó sus condiciones apenas seis meses más tarde y renovó la lucha contra sus vasallos.

Sin embargo, el resultado de ambas iniciativas de paz era incierto. Felipe adoptó otras políticas que arriesgaban la suspensión de armas en el Mediterráneo *(véase capítulo 15)*, mientras que la reanudación de hostilidades en los Países Bajos era, primordialmente, la consecuencia de las ambiciones y complejas relaciones entre tres personas: don Juan de Austria; su secretario, Juan de Escobedo; y el secretario real, Antonio Pérez. Los tres convencieron a Felipe para quebrar la paz con los rebeldes que había aprobado seis meses antes, una decisión que trajo consigo consecuencias funestas. A Escobedo le costó la vida; a Pérez, la libertad; y a don Juan, la honra: todos morirían desconsolados y desacreditados. A Felipe no solo le

costó los servicios de tres personas de gran talento, sino que también hizo que su gobierno estuviera polarizado y luego paralizado durante dos años por las antipatías que surgían entre sus ministros. Después, Pérez se convirtió en el catalizador de las Alteraciones de Aragón, aliado de sus enemigos en Francia e Inglaterra y autor de críticas perjudiciales de gran difusión. Lo peor de todo fue que el rey perdió su mejor oportunidad para terminar con la rebelión de los Países Bajos y, con esto, mantener su influencia y poder en la Europa atlántica. ¿Cómo cometió tantos errores políticos un monarca «quien ha ya casi 33 años que trato negocios», como se ufanaba Felipe en esa misma época?[562]

La historia de dos secretarios

Antonio Pérez nació en Madrid en 1540. Era hijo ilegítimo de Gonzalo Pérez, un clérigo que trabajaba en la secretaría de Carlos V y que, un año después, se convirtió en secretario particular del príncipe Felipe. Antonio afirmaría más tarde que, durante el cuarto de siglo siguiente, su padre «le enseñó [a Felipe] la firma, tan conocida por el mundo», «Yo el rey»; y, sin duda, dada su formación humanística y su amplia experiencia en otros asuntos, enseñó al joven príncipe muchas cosas más. Cuando Felipe se convirtió en rey de España en 1556, nombró a Gonzalo su secretario de Estado para asuntos extranjeros, cargo que desempeñó hasta su muerte en 1566, conservando la confianza de su soberano hasta el final *(véase capítulo 8)*. Gonzalo también obtuvo una declaración «de cómo era natural de Aragón», una medida que medio siglo más tarde salvaría la vida de su hijo.[563]

Antonio estudió en la República de Venecia y los Países Bajos antes de regresar a España en torno a 1558 para asistir a cursos en Alcalá de Henares y Salamanca. También aprendió mucho de su padre, en cuya covachuela trabajaba desde al

menos 1562; tal vez el hecho de que Felipe y Antonio compartieran el mismo maestro estableció un vínculo entre ellos. Pero este vínculo no fue lo suficientemente fuerte para conseguir la inmediata sucesión de Antonio al puesto de su padre, quizá porque el rey desaprobaba la relación del joven con doña Juana Coello, con quien había tenido un hijo antes de que ambos se casaran en 1567. Antonio también se enfrentaba a la hostilidad del duque de Alba, con quien Gonzalo se había enemistado en sus últimos años, de modo que el duque pidió el puesto para su propio protegido, Gabriel de Zayas. Aunque, tras la partida del duque hacia los Países Bajos, Antonio se convirtió en secretario de Estado para Italia y el Mediterráneo, en tanto que Zayas se hacía cargo de los asuntos del norte de Europa, de aquí en adelante Pérez sería miembro del bando cortesano liderado por Ruy Gómez de Silva.

Juan de Escobedo, un hidalgo nacido en Colindres, Cantabria, alrededor de 1530, era miembro del mismo grupo. En la década de 1550 sirvió como criado de confianza de los duques de Francavilla, quizá debido a un parentesco lejano (la duquesa siempre le llamó «primo»), y de su hija única, doña Ana de Mendoza, casada con Ruy Gómez, en cuya casa de Bruselas residió mientras estaba con el rey en Flandes. Ruy Gómez, por su parte, describía a Escobedo como su «criado» y le utilizó para misiones confidenciales hasta que, en 1566, el rey nombró secretario de Hacienda a este último. Siete años más tarde, Ruy Gómez decidió que su antiguo criado podría ser más útil como enlace con don Juan de Austria, quien, como vencedor de Lepanto y capitán general de la Armada de la Santa Liga, disfrutaba de un enorme prestigio y un presupuesto anual de más de un millón de ducados. Pérez aprobó el nombramiento, escribiéndole al rey: «Del Escovedo creo yo que sería más a propósito para el lado del señor don Juan porque le tengo por más templado y de diferente humor y zelo, y no nada

aitalianado. Vuestra Magestad me perdonará si passo adelante, que por la causa que he dicho y aver entendido desta materia algunas cosas lo hago».[564]

Este mensaje revela no solo la confianza en sí mismo de Pérez cuando aconsejaba a su amo, sino también su amistad con Escobedo, que, según un cortesano afirmaría posteriormente, «no podía ser mayor ni más continuada entre dos hombres». Pérez también forjó un estrecho vínculo con don Juan. Así, en 1571, cuando Felipe le negó permiso para volver a España, don Juan le confió a Pérez: «Harto más me holgara de tener la licencia que esperava para yr a bessar a Su Magestad las manos, y passar algunos buenos ratos con el señor Antonio Pérez». Tres años más tarde, cuando Felipe estaba meditando la distribución de dinero para la próxima campaña en el Mediterráneo, Pérez le aconsejó que lo más acertado sería «remitirse todo al señor don Juan, y que él lo reparta, y haga hazer en cada parte lo que huviere menester». Cuando don Juan visitaba Madrid, se hospedaba en la lujosa villa que Pérez tenía en las afueras de la capital, La Casilla.[565]

Escobedo se convirtió pronto en intermediario entre don Juan y su medio hermano. Cuando el príncipe le envió a la corte en 1575, el rey declaró que «quedo yo tan podrido y cansado dello que no puede ser más; aunque convendrá despacharle luego»; y cuando abandonó la corte, el rey anunció a uno de sus clientes italianos que Escobedo partía con «la resolución que he tomado en el negocio a que le embió el ilustrísimo don Juan de Austria, mi hermano, estando muy satisfecho que ternéys de todo ello mucho secreto».[566] ¿Cuál pudo ser ese «negocio» secreto que dejó a Felipe «tan podrido y cansado»?

¿El próximo rey de Inglaterra?

Un grupo de católicos ingleses exiliados acudió a Roma en

1575, año jubilar, y presentó al papa un informe argumentando que tanto Inglaterra como Irlanda podían ser recuperadas para la causa de la fe enviando una fuerza pontificia de cinco mil soldados, comandada por el exiliado angloirlandés Thomas Stukeley, directamente desde Italia a Liverpool. Siempre optimistas, los exiliados afirmaron que la llegada de estas tropas provocaría un levantamiento general de los católicos que, a su vez, permitiría a María Estuardo escapar de su cautiverio y convertirse en soberana de Inglaterra, tras lo cual se casaría con don Juan. Escobedo se dirigió a Roma para asegurarse de que este proyecto —llamado de nuevo la Empresa de Inglaterra— gozaba del total respaldo del papa y, a continuación, a Madrid para asegurarse 100.000 ducados y el beneplácito de Felipe. El rey envió cumplidamente la mitad de la subvención requerida, si bien insistió en que Stukeley debería esperar hasta que los Países Bajos estuvieran de nuevo en paz.

En aquel momento, Felipe había resuelto que su medio hermano sustituiría a don Luis de Requesens como gobernador general de los Países Bajos, y estaba pensando si don Juan debería emprender sin más el Camino de los Españoles a la cabeza de un ejército o viajar lo más rápido posible para concluir la paz. Todavía no se había resuelto este dilema cuando, en marzo de 1576, llegó a Madrid la noticia de la muerte de Requesens, que dejaba sin jefe tanto al gobierno como al ejército real en los Países Bajos. Felipe sabía que, incluso en este momento de crisis, su testarudo medio hermano podría negarse a ir. Por eso, el rey trabajaba con Pérez para hacerle una oferta irresistible: a cambio de ir a Bruselas, Felipe haría todo lo posible para sentar a don Juan en el trono de Inglaterra.

El rey escribió una carta a don Juan afirmando que quería ir él mismo a los Países Bajos para tratar un asunto de tanta importancia para él y para Dios, pero que debía quedarse en

España para movilizar los recursos necesarios con que sostener toda la monarquía. Dado que la situación en Flandes requería soluciones nuevas, continuó, y que solo un miembro de la familia real, «la más conjuncta a mí que pueda ser», tendría la autoridad para llevarlas a cabo, Felipe informaba a su medio hermano de que «me he venido a determinar que no ay otra [persona], ni la puede haber, que la vuestra». El irresistible engaño aparecía en tres cartas para Escobedo, todas firmadas por Pérez, pero revisadas tantas veces por Felipe que, finalmente, el contenido acabó siendo también suyo. En la más breve de las tres, el autor explicaba que Escobedo debía mostrar las otras dos a don Juan e insistía en «que tiene vuestra merced occasión de hazer a Su Magestad un gran servicio y merecerle mucha merced», una arriesgada promesa que se volvería contra sus autores. En una segunda epístola, se requería a Escobedo que hiciera jurar a don Juan que guardaría el secreto antes de entregarle la carta real dirigida a él, y recalcaba que «esta occasión y necesidad no es de las que sufren réplicas ni condiciones». También aseguraba a Escobedo que «yéndole a Su Magestad lo que va en este negocio, y queriendo enviar a su hermano, por no poder yr él mismo, y estando el único remedio de todo en uno de los dos, ha de creer Su Alteza que Su Magestad hará y proveerá más de lo posible para que se acierte lo que se pretende», es decir, que apoyara la Empresa de Inglaterra, otra promesa que tendría consecuencias catastróficas.[567]

La tercera carta para Escobedo era aún más notable. Escribiendo «como amigo de vuestra merced y tan servidor y zeloso del servicio del señor don Juan», su autor revelaba que don Juan debía dirigirse directamente a Bruselas sin tropas, sin ministros y casi sin servidores. Felipe estudió detalladamente el borrador preparado por Pérez: «He reparado hoy dos veces esta carta», para que «vaya de manera que [don Juan] no se pueda

rehusar el negocio». Insertó de su propia mano una insinuación de chantaje: que don Juan «no cumpliría a Dios, si a esto faltase […] ni con su padre cumpliría, no acudiendo a la necesidad de aquellos Estados que él quixo tanto, y por quien aventuró tanto», así que «aún desde el cielo parece que se quexaría dél si en esto le faltase». También añadió la engañosa oferta: cuando don Juan hubiera llegado a los Países Bajos, estaría perfectamente situado para llevar a cabo la Empresa de Inglaterra. Y se insistía a Escobedo:

> En verdad, señor, que he pensado que para aquello de Inglaterra que vuestra merced entendía en Roma [con el papa], no será malo hallarse Su Alteza cerca y ocupado en tan grave servicio de Su Majestad; demás de que yo deseo ver al Señor don Juan en algún cargo principal en que él sea solo el dueño de todo, para que conozca Su Magestad lo que vale y la buena cuenta que sabrá dar de qualquier gouierno sin embaraço ni competencia de otros ministros.

A pesar de que esto se encontraba muy próximo a la traición, cuando Felipe leyó y corrigió el borrador no hizo ninguna observación acerca de este párrafo. El 8 de abril de 1576, todas las cartas salieron de Madrid para Nápoles, donde residía don Juan. Cuando el rey firmó su propia carta a don Juan, añadió: «Harto quisiera yo que el que lleva este despacho tuviera alas para bolar, y vos también para poderos poner allí más presto».[568]

El rey lo deseó en vano: casi tres meses pasaron sin respuesta. Pérez minimizó el ominoso silencio de Nápoles, y aseguró a su amo que don Juan «ha de obedescerse la voluntad de Vuestra Magestad» y que, gracias a su destreza en «apretar a Escovedo, podría ser respondiendo» enseguida. Pero Felipe era mejor profeta y, el 16 de junio de 1576, confesaba a Pérez: «No dexo de temer que [don Juan] ha de haver algunas demandas terribles que sean malas de cumplir, como es querer mucho dinero y mucha gente y mucha livertad».[569]

El silencio acabó el 1 de julio, cuando Pérez anunció bruscamente al rey que «el secretario Escobedo ha llegado esta

noche» a El Escorial, y que los dos secretarios «avemos venido desde Alcalá juntos, hablando en lo que trae en comisión».[570] ¿Qué contenía esa comisión? ¿Y qué significaba que los dos viajaran juntos cien kilómetros —un viaje de dos días— antes de informar al rey de que los tan esperados mensajes habían llegado por fin?

Las cuatro cartas del 8 de abril habían llegado a Nápoles a principios de mayo, y, después de un retraso de casi tres semanas, don Juan aceptó tanto su nombramiento como gobernador general de Flandes como la orden de ir allí directamente sin pasar primero por la corte. Pero como su medio hermano había temido, antes de salir de Nápoles don Juan dictó dos juegos de instrucciones para Escobedo, portador de su aceptación, llenos de demandas políticas (poderes amplios y fondos inmensos) y personales (tanto mercedes para sus aliados y criados como la legitimación de su hija Juana, que ahora tenía tres años). También confió a Escobedo otras cosas para comunicar de palabra, especialmente su deseo de venir a la corte para «besar las manos de Vuestra Magestad» y, por supuesto, para negociar en persona con Felipe sobre su misión en los Países Bajos y en Inglaterra. Mientras esperaba la respuesta de su medio hermano, don Juan viajó hasta Vigevano, una ciudad lombarda cerca de la frontera de Saboya. Según un espía toscano, todo sugirió que don Juan «había de pasar en Flandes, como todavía hay voz pública», pero en julio se mudaron «todos los razonamientos de guerra en fiestas y torneos» y don Juan volvió a Milán. Ahora, notaba el espía, «aunque se entiende de las cartas de la corte de España que el señor don Juan seguramente va a viajar a Flandes, en este momento no se vee señal de su parte», y especulaba que no saldría hasta recibir de Felipe la respuesta a las demandas enviadas con Escobedo.[571] Había adivinado solamente una parte de la historia.

El 16 de abril de 1576, una semana después de firmar sus cartas («repasadas» por Su Majestad) para convencer a Escobedo de que don Juan debía partir hacia Flandes de inmediato, Pérez escribió de nuevo a su colega para ampliar lo contenido en aquellos últimos despachos «que él [Felipe] ha visto, que son todas sino esta». Se trata de una epístola secreta, subversiva y aun sediciosa. Pérez empezó por asegurar «que todo lo que le pareciere muy fuerte y crudo dellas ha sido añadido [por el rey] de su misma mano en las minutas que yo había ordenado». Pero, continuó Pérez:

> Sería [yo] de parecer que el señor don Juan, cuanto al obedescer y partirse para Lombardía y sacrificarse a la obediencia, obedezca y se parta y se sacrifique a la voluntad de su hermano, diciendo que no tiene otra sino esta, y que haciendo esto, advierta y replique, y pida las cosas que para el acertamiento del negocio le parecieren convenientes.

¡Para Lombardía! No para Flandes, «pues si se perdiesse aquello [Flandes] o se cerrase el paso del remedio», el simple hecho de que don Juan hubiera partido ya para Lombardía, como se le ordenaba, haría que se ganara la confianza y la gratitud de su medio hermano; y, si para cuando llegara a Milán, en Flandes «las cosas sufren y pueden esperar el remedio de la persona de don Juan», él llevaría a cabo «un gran servicio a Dios, a la corona, a su hermano, y gana para sí un gran auctoridad para merecer por justicia divina y humana mucho acrecentamiento de su hermano; y, cuando el mundo corriese, no se halla él ni vuestra merced en mal puesto para sí y para sus amigos». Pérez llenaba su carta con «nos», y «lo que nosotros habemos tenido y discurrido» sobre los planes del rey, y por si acaso Escobedo no captaba la idea, concluía su carta secretísima:

> Torno otra vez a resumirme: que para todo caso, succeda lo que succediere, soy de parecer que obedezcamos luego y partamos [¡otra vez el «nos»!]; y que haciendo esto, se replique, o pida, o advierta lo que conviniere, advirtiendo que esto sea todo por el acrecentamiento del negocio y no por cosa particular, y que para lo demás esperamos en el tiempo que nos habrá dado mil salidas.[572]

Claramente Pérez había traicionado a su amo: incitó a Escobedo a sabotear los planes del rey para la salvación de su monarquía con una prolongada parada de don Juan en Lombardía. Esto, sin duda, explica por qué, cuando Pérez se enteró de la llegada a España de Escobedo, le interceptó en Alcalá y cabalgó con él «juntos, hablando en lo que trae en comisión» todo el camino hasta llegar a El Escorial en la noche del 1 de julio de 1576. Pérez quiso asegurarse de que Escobedo no dijera nada a Felipe del contenido de su carta, y también averiguar si don Juan había seguido sus consejos y permanecido en Lombardía. Una respuesta afirmativa de Escobedo a ambas preguntas tranquilizó a Pérez, pero la situación cambió de repente seis semanas más tarde, cuando, al amanecer el 12 de agosto, don Juan salió de Milán en dirección a Génova, donde había reunido una pequeña escuadra de galeras, con la intención de «passar a España por algunos negocios importantes al servicio del rey mi señor y bien común de la cristiandad». Diez días más tarde, llegó a Barcelona y, de inmediato, prosiguió su viaje hasta El Escorial.[573]

La verdad sobre este extraordinario acto de atrevida desobediencia a las órdenes tan explícitas del rey solamente se descubrió después de la muerte de don Juan, cuando Juan de Zúñiga, todavía embajador español en Roma, pidió al cardenal de Como, secretario de Estado del papa, «que me descubriese un secreto, ahora que eran muertas las personas a quien podría ser que estuviese obligado a guardarle. Y preguntele: ¿qué trato y inteligencia tuvo el señor don Juan que haya gloria con Su Santidad y con él sobre la Empresa de Inglaterra?». El cardenal compartió con Zúñiga indiscreciones sensacionales: había escrito «muy largas cartas» a don Juan, de parte de Gregorio XIII, sobre la Empresa de Inglaterra; y cuando Escobedo visitó Roma, el papa

habló también en ello; y que una carta que escribió el cardenal al señor don Juan

en nombre de Su Santidad, cuando el año de [15]76 fue a España, encargándole propusiese a Vuestra Magestad el negocio, fue concertado primero con el señor don Juan, y que en ella le exhortaba a que fuese en persona a proponerlo a Vuestra Magestad, porque no tenía licencia de ir.

Es decir, Gregorio XIII incitó a don Juan a desobedecer a su medio hermano y viajar hasta España específicamente para obtener el apoyo de Felipe para la Empresa de Inglaterra.[574]

Hermano contra hermano

La llegada de su medio hermano cogió a Felipe completamente por sorpresa. El rey trabajaba en un paquete de concesiones que pensaba confiar a un mensajero que llegaría a Bruselas al mismo tiempo que don Juan. Dos días después de la llegada de Escobedo con noticias de que don Juan aceptaría ir a Flandes, Felipe despachó al mensajero a Flandes con cartas en las que informaba a sus ministros de que don Juan sería su nuevo lugarteniente; y en agosto coordinaba la preparación de un juego de instrucciones para él y de un montón de cartas tanto para sus ministros flamencos, mandándoles que obedecieran al nuevo gobernador general, como para los soberanos vecinos, pidiéndoles «la misma buena inteligencia, correspondencia y vecindad» con don Juan que con sus antecesores. Nada más firmar estos documentos, Felipe recibió la noticia de que su medio hermano estaba en Barcelona en lugar de en Bruselas.[575] El rey no podía ocultar su enojo. Enseguida, envió a don Juan el billete siguiente:

Hermano, anoche me dio Escovedo vuestra carta y aviso de vuestra llegada a Barcelona, y no puedo dejar de decir que me ha dado tanto cuidado esta resolución, por la coyuntura en que ha sido, y por el estado en que están las cosas, que con desear y holgar mucho de veros y teneros presente, me ha quitado mucha parte del contentamiento que esto me diera.[576]

Las nuevas de la desobediencia de don Juan llegaron a la corte junto con más noticias alarmantes de Bruselas. «Las cosas de Flandes», se lamentaba Felipe el 29 de agosto al cardenal Quiroga, «me traen tan ocupado y aun desasosegado que no me

dexan todas las vezes hazer en las demás lo que querría». Solicitaba su consejo sobre cómo mandar a don Juan a Flandes, «porque si volviese por donde vino sería mucha la dilación. He pensado si sería cosa de ir por tierra en nombre de otro y a diligencia con dos o tres (no más)». Quiroga contestó que, a menos que don Juan partiera de inmediato, autorizado a dar a los flamencos todo lo que exigían, «ellos assentarán una república tan a su provecho y con tantas libertades que valdría poco menos no ser señor della». Sugirió que se anunciara que su medio hermano realizaría el viaje desde Italia, para distraer la atención, pero en realidad le enviaría a través de Francia «por la posta desconocida». Quiroga enfatizaba que «aunque está harto trabajoso, aviendo dilación, cada día va de mal en peor, de manera que todo el trabajo y gasto aya sido perdido». El rey aceptó esta lógica: «Sería más secreto y disimulado» si don Juan dejara la corte para visitar a doña Magdalena de Ulloa, que le había criado, «como lo suele hazer, y ha hecho las vezes que ha venido de fuera de estos reynos». Desde la casa de doña Magdalena, situada cerca de Valladolid, su medio hermano podía escabullirse a Flandes y, entonces, concluía Felipe optimista, «no se podrá herrar el negocio con el ayuda de Dios, que lo encamyne, pues se haze por su servicio y así lo espero en él».[577] Felipe escribió estas palabras el primero de septiembre de 1576. Ese mismo día, en San Lorenzo de El Escorial, los dos hijos de Carlos V se reunieron.

Por el momento, la presencia de don Juan en la corte le dio ventaja, pues no desaprovechó la ocasión de insistir en las «demandas terribles» que el rey había temido (y que había confesado en la mencionada carta a Pérez del 16 de junio de 1576). Margarita de Parma lo veía con claridad y urgió a don Juan a «tratar libremente con Su Magestad de todo, y mostrarle desnudamente el estado de los tiempos presentes», y también a

aclarar y establecer sus cosas de manera que en cualquiera parte que Vuestra

> Alteza vaya y en todo tiempo, podría estar con el ánimo quieto, et además hacerse cuenta de la inclinación y voluntad de Su Magestad, para poder servirle sin impedimentos y conforme a su gusto et satisfacción: porque, alejándose, no se puede hacerlo ni con cartas ni con terceras personas aquellos oficios que se hacen con la comodidad en persona y a viva voz, de que Vuestra Alteza ya ha experimentado por las cosas pasadas.[578]

Don Juan estaba de acuerdo, y se negó a salir de la corte sin dos garantías de su medio hermano: fondos adecuados para su misión en Flandes y apoyo para su plan de derrocar a Isabel Tudor.

El rey hizo lo que pudo pero, tras el decreto de suspensión, los asentistas afectados se negaban a realizar nuevos préstamos, a menos que Felipe accediera a cumplir con los antiguos, y este fracaso le dejó desolado. «Creo que nunca ha de llegar al cabo», se lamentaba a Mateo Vázquez, involucrado en las negociaciones para un Medio General con sus banqueros, «y que andaremos toda la vida embaraçados con este negocio». Felipe se desesperó cuando llegaron noticias de que «lo que pasa en Flandes es peor que nunca», y «con esto yo no he tenido quietud por agora para ver lo más destas cosas».[579] El nuncio papal, Nicolás Ormanetto (casualmente antiguo colaborador de Felipe cuando era rey de Inglaterra), intentó convencer a Felipe de que la Empresa de Inglaterra, que pondría a don Juan en el trono de Isabel Tudor, solucionaría todos sus problemas. «Nadie desea más que yo que aquel negocio se efectúe», contestaba el rey cautelosamente, «por el servicio de Dios y bien de la christiandad que puede resultar de la reducción de aquel reyno. Pero el quándo y cómo se ha de emprender en tal negocio depende del camyno que toman las cosas de Flandes y de otras muchas consideraciones: que se deven myrar mucho en negocios tan grandes». Prometió seguir pensando en soluciones, «aunque se me ofrecen hartas dificultades». Los continuos retrasos le causaron «tanta pena y cuydado» que «no sé cómo se puede vivir con ello».[580]

Finalmente, el 18 de octubre de 1576, don Juan se declaró satisfecho. Un papel ológrafo, al parecer con las notas para la última reunión de ambos, recogía las «demandas terribles» a las que Felipe había consentido para librarse de don Juan. Con el fin de mejor atacar a Inglaterra, Felipe autorizaba a su medio hermano a aceptar la demanda de los flamencos de retirar todas las tropas extranjeras siempre que los tercios españoles pudieran regresar por mar, lo que permitiría a don Juan conducirles contra Isabel. El rey también concedía «que en estos últimos desórdenes y en todos los pasados, debe de olvidar y no le hace caso de todo lo pasado», y permitía que

> si las cosas estubiessen tan apretadas que lo pidiessen todo absolutamente, y que de otra manera no quisiessen recibirle, paresce que, salvando la religión y mi obediencia cuanto se puede, llegando las cosas a estos términos, presupuesto que conviene atajar este fuego y no dexar llegar aquella gente a la última desesperación, y que con ella se cierre todo, que se debe conceder lo que fuere menester para acabar y salvar lo que se pudiere.

El rey tan solo se atrevió a sugerir un límite: según otro papelito ológrafo con notas, el rey le urgía a «andar con tientos en los amores, y no ofender con ellos a la gente principal». ¡Felipe no quería hallarse con más sobrinas ilegítimas![581]

Con esto, don Juan salió para Bruselas, viajando ignominiosamente (como había insistido su medio hermano) a través de Francia disfrazado de criado, con un único acompañante. Todavía albergaba sospechas de que Felipe nunca cumpliría sus promesas, y en su última carta, escrita desde suelo español, le recordaba: «Ora, señor, lo que conviene es que Vuestra Magestad mande acabar con mucha brevedad lo del dinero», y, «pues puede suceder caso en que se me acudiría con la sangre propia, si valiese, suplico de nuevo agora a Vuestra Magestad se me acuda con lo que digo: que es dinero, dinero y más dinero, porque sin este valiera más no haber puesto tantas prendas».[582] Dejó a Escobedo en la corte para mantener la presión.

Don Juan de Austria en Flandes

Los temores de don Juan sobre la constancia de Felipe eran bien fundados: su salida de la corte liberó al rey del chantaje y le permitió cambiar sus prioridades. El 11 de noviembre de 1576, redactó con su propia mano una serie de sinuosas y confusas instrucciones que Escobedo debería llevar consigo a Flandes. «Por una parte», admitía el rey, «es [esta] la mejor ocasión que se puede offrescer por tomar» a Isabel «desapercibida y para sacar la dicha gente de mis Estados con más reputación, y el servicio grande que se haría a Nuestro Señor en reduzir aquel reyno todo a la religión católica». Pero, por otra, debía considerar «las obligaciones en que nos meteríamos de començarse sin mucho fundamento y seguridad del buen sucesso del, las dificultades que puede aver en conseguir este negocio y las grandes inconvenientes que podrían suceder de turbarse la Christiandad y el mundo todo». Por tanto, continuaba, «en ninguna manera se deve emprender este negocio hasta que lo dessos estados esté todo quieto y llano, y que no aya en ellos ningún género de embarazo […] por poco que fuese […] pues se dexa muy bien considerar quan gran error sería dexar en peligro nuestros Estados por yr a emprender los agenos». Además, don Juan debía averiguar qué grado de apoyo podía esperar de los católicos ingleses, «pues ay ningún reyno tan flaco ni pequeña que se puede ganar, ni deve emprender, sin ayuda del mismo reyno». Finalmente, y lo más extraño de todo, «como tenéis entendido de la calidad de aquella reyna [Isabel], ordinariamente ha tenido tratos e intelligencia con las personas con quien le ha parescido que se podría casar, y podrá ser que por algún rodeo entrasse en este pensamiento y plática con vos. Paresce que, sucediendo el caso, no se deve huyr, sino dexarla correr quanto ella quisiere» para disfrazar con «mayor dissimulación» la invasión y la conquista planeadas.[583]

Escobedo, a quien Felipe entregó estas instrucciones, le previno: «Yo voy tan mal despachado que temo la llegada, y que la desesperación de verlo no haga tomar al señor don Juan alguna terrible resolución».[584] Tenía razón. Cuando don Juan leyó las instrucciones traídas por su secretario —tan diferentes de lo acordado en España—, se sintió cruelmente decepcionado y cayó en la cuenta de que, desde el principio, el rey había disimulado su apoyo a la Empresa de Inglaterra para persuadirle de abandonar Nápoles rumbo a Flandes. Inmediatamente, empezó a buscar estrategias alternativas para conseguir sus propias metas.

Aunque don Juan tenía cierta razón al reprocharle a Felipe el cambio en su política, parece que nunca le pasó por la cabeza que su propia dilación —primero en Nápoles, luego en Lombardía y finalmente en España— había socavado la Empresa. Cuando llegó a Luxemburgo el 3 de noviembre, la mayor parte del Ejército de Flandes se había desintegrado; en lugar de los sesenta mil soldados al mando de Requesens cuando este murió en marzo, no quedaban más que once mil, la mayoría de ellos amotinados. Para empeorarlo aún más, al día siguiente los españoles amotinados en Aalst lanzaron un ataque sorpresa sobre Amberes, donde destruyeron más de mil casas y mataron a más de ocho mil personas. El saqueo de la ciudad, pronto llamado la Furia Española, desencadenó la «rebolución general» que Requesens había predicho. Cuatro días después de esta tragedia, los delegados en Gante ratificaron y publicaron una pacificación que puso fin a la guerra. A continuación, enviaron a los delegados para asegurarse la aprobación del acuerdo por parte de don Juan y, por medio de este, la del rey.

Como reconocía él mismo, don Juan carecía de las cualidades necesarias para estas delicadas situaciones. Admitía, a su primo Manuel Filiberto de Saboya, exgobernador de los

Países Bajos, que en el «trato con jentes tan puestas en ser insolentes y impertinentes», se necesitaba «spíritu de ángel; y por esto yo, que estoy más fuera de serlo que otro, padezco también más que otro». En lugar de adquirir «spíritu de ángel», don Juan concentró todos sus esfuerzos en conseguir la Empresa de Inglaterra, y para ello movilizó al papa, a los exiliados ingleses, a los católicos franceses, a Juan de Escobedo y a Antonio Pérez.[585]

Los dos secretarios estaban comprometidos desde el principio. Cuando don Juan estaba todavía en la corte, Felipe se lamentaba de que «Escobedo solicita harto este negocio [de Inglaterra], y yo le pedí por escrito lo que sobre [e]llo se le ofrecía». Y continuaba: «Se me ofrecen hartas dificultades, y más con la paz que han hecho [los católicos y los protestantes] en Francia, aunque ¡a Escobedo se le haze muy fácil el negocio!». Tras la salida de don Juan camino de Flandes, Pérez y Escobedo se convirtieron prácticamente en los únicos intermediarios entre el rey y su medio hermano. Cuando Quiroga, el ministro al que Felipe había confiado sus negociaciones con aquel, le preguntó al rey detalles sobre la misión de don Juan en los Países Bajos, la respuesta fue sencilla y seca: «Os dirá Antonio Pérez».[586] Años más tarde, don Francisco de Gurrea y Aragón, conde de Luna, afirmó:

> Fiaba tanto su Magestad de él [Pérez], que secretos tan grandes de los que a los reyes en materia de Estado se les ofrecen, se resolvían todos con él, y su parecer se tenía y estimaba y él lograba todo […]. [Y porque] la persona que el señor don Juan de Austria más estimaba y fiaba sus negocios era la de Antonio Pérez, todavía llevó tal lenguaje que entretuvo en balanza a ambas a dos personas reales, fiándose cada cual que les decía lo que deseaban saber uno del otro, haciendo el oficio de espía doble.[587]

Y es cierto que el secretario podría haber hecho «oficio de espía doble» gracias a un sorprendente cambio en el sistema administrativo de Felipe.

Antes de su salida para Flandes, don Juan arrancó otra

concesión al rey: que su correspondencia española no pasara por la oficina de Gabriel de Zayas, secretario de Estado para los asuntos del norte de Europa y vinculado al duque de Alba, sino por las manos de Pérez. Como explicó el rey más tarde, «no le he permitido por desconfianza de Zayas, sino porque my hermano a su partida me lo pidió con gran instancia, y aun que acetaría de mala gana la jornada si no fuese con esta condición, de manera que fue fuerza concedérselo». Entonces, nada más llegar a los Países Bajos, don Juan preguntaba a Felipe: «¿Si será Vuestra Magestad servido que estas mis cartas se lean en consejo [de Estado]?». Sin esperar contestación, suplicaba que solamente «las vean y traten sobre ellas dos» personas: Pérez y don Pedro Fajardo, marqués de Los Vélez, el mayordomo de la reina que había estudiado en la universidad con Pérez y que, como este, había apoyado a Ruy Gómez de Silva contra el duque de Alba. Felipe aceptó esto también. Aunque propuso un cambio —«podríase añadir el inquisidor general» Quiroga —, concluyó su rescripto: «Vos hazed lo mejor, Antonio Pérez».[588] El secretario estuvo de acuerdo con esta sugerencia y, durante los ocho meses siguientes, todas las cartas de don Juan recibidas en la corte aparecían con el endoso «Vista por los Dos» —es decir, Quiroga y el marqués de Los Vélez—; la información que recibían «los Dos» dependía exclusivamente de Pérez, en cuya oficina se descifraban todos los despachos procedentes del norte de Europa. Estos tres ministros constituían, en ese momento, la única referencia de Felipe en los asuntos relacionados con los Países Bajos, Inglaterra y Francia. En palabras de un embajador agudo, estos «son el todo, y los demás son ornamento».[589]

Es difícil desentrañar las relaciones entre el rey, su medio hermano, Pérez y «los Dos». Primero, Felipe comunicaba algunas decisiones clave en reuniones a solas con Pérez que apenas dejaban rastro (si es que dejaban alguno): como escribía

una vez acerca de las cartas de don Juan, «a su tiempo hablaremos en ella, que es más para de palabra que para escrito». Además, don Juan omitía de sus despachos detalles importantes porque «no son para escrivirse en carta que ha de pasar por tan largos y peligrosos caminos».[590] Finalmente, muchos de los secretos plasmados en papel fueron destruidos. En 1576, en 1579 y de nuevo en 1590, Pérez quemó un gran número de cartas, incluidas las intercambiadas con don Juan; y el rey quemaba con frecuencia cartas confidenciales. Don Juan tenía la misma costumbre: como escribía a una confidente suya, «[vuestras cartas] a mayor seguridad, tengo por costumbre de romperlas en acavando de responder a ellas», porque «al fin son papeles papeles»; y cuando murió, según su albacea, «en quemar [sus] papeles y retratos hube mucha soledad», pero «dejolo así mandado, y hase hecho».[591] Sin embargo, a pesar de estos vacíos en la documentación conservada, queda claro que cuando Felipe aceptó la propuesta de que solo Pérez se encargara de su correspondencia sobre materias de Estado con su medio hermano, se puso a sí mismo en situación de ser engañado. Solo Pérez abría, descifraba y hacía resúmenes de todas las cartas enviadas por don Juan, incluidas aquellas dirigidas «al rey en su mano»; y solo Pérez redactaba las consultas de «los Dos» y las respuestas reales.

Habiendo creado un entorno idóneo tanto para la decepción como para el «pensamiento grupal» *(véase capítulo 4)*, don Juan, Escobedo y Pérez tomaron varias decisiones clave para facilitar la invasión de Inglaterra a pesar de las dudas de Felipe. En los Países Bajos, don Juan y su secretario concluyeron una «suspensión de armas» con los Estados Generales en diciembre de 1576, y, cuando las noticias llegaron a Madrid, enseguida Pérez se esforzó al máximo para convencer a su amo de que debía «acabar por conçierto como se pudiesse, y presto». Poco después, repetía con la misma certitud: «Lo que

le conviene a él [don Juan] y al servicio de Vuestra Magestad es recoger aquellos estados con la paz».[592] No era tan fácil.

Los Estados —con más de doscientos diputados— no estaban unidos. Como don Juan se quejó: «No solo no se puede juzgar de una hora a otra lo que será, mas aun vanse encadenando los negocios de suerte que, pensando tener alguna cosa siquiera con qué despachar correo, entretienen los mismos negocios de día en día la ejecución desto, por lo que van prometiendo de sí y engañando a los que los traten. Y de esto es la causa», continuó con frustración, «que como son tantos y tan discordes estos hombres con quien se platica, lo que los unos conciertan los otros lo niegan, y lo que muchos reprueban otros admiten, pues al fin solo se han hecho concordes para morir y salir con la suya, ¡en el cómo y de qué manera está la diferencia!». También, advertía Escobedo al rey, algunos de los diputados querrían «formar su república […] sin reconocimiento de su superior», así que se tiene «por cierta la guerra; y procurar de hacer las provisiones y prevenciones desde luego, ahorrará mucho tiempo y dinero».[593] Envió como documento anexo una relación en la que demostraba que la guerra costaría 500.000 ducados al mes.

¿Hablaban en serio don Juan y Escobedo al decir «tener por cierta la guerra»? ¿O habían enviado estas predicciones y cifras tremendas como una trampa para obtener de Felipe más concesiones que alcanzaran la paz y abriesen el camino para la Empresa de Inglaterra? Fuera como fuese, la perspectiva de una reanudación de la guerra aterraba al rey, que le envió una carta urgente por triplicado prohibiéndolo: «Os tomo, hermano, a encargar que escuséys la rotura y que os accomodéys con el tiempo y la necessidad, que son los mejores consejeros que podéis tener en un negocio tan apretado y harto trabajoso».[594] Dos semanas más tarde, Felipe se lamentó a Pérez de «que todo lo que mi hermano hiziese no aprovechase, ni ellos lo acertasen;

y todavía quixesen la guerra y forzasen a ella». En este caso, lamentó «que no sería posible proveer lo que sería menester, y que, si se hiziese, sería faltar a lo del Armada del Turco y a todo lo demás». Entonces, casi a mitad de la frase, el rey cambió de opinión, apoyando la estrategia de destrucción, propuesta en su día por Alba y Requesens, como el mejor medio para obligar a los holandeses a negociar. Informaba a Pérez: «Yo no veo remedio sino que my hermano metiese tantos alemanes de a pie y de a caballo juntamente con los españoles que allí ay, pues no se le pueden dar otros, y que destruyesen la tierra y se pagasen del saco de allá. Y así se concertase con» los flamencos. Ordenó que Pérez y «los Dos» consideraran su sugerencia, añadiendo que «aunque esto es bien contra my [voluntad], menos mal será conservar los Estados destruydos que no perderlos no destruidos».[595]

Tanto Pérez como «los Dos» quedaron atónitos cuando recibieron esta insólita sugerencia, y la rechazaron con firmeza. Enfatizaban «la necessidad del concierto, lo mejor que se pudiesse, la impossibilidad de poder entrar en guerra, y los grandes peligros que correría todo lo de acá y de Italia si Vuestra Magestad entrasse agora en ella». Felipe se echó atrás, si bien no completamente, en su draconiano plan de destruir lo que no pudiera conservar: «Si los Estados quieren la guerra y no la paz, no se podrá escusar; pero en este caso, visto que no ay forma para hazerse como hasta aquí, sería fuerza hazerse como se dice ["que destruyesen la tierra y se pagasen del saco de allá"]». Entonces intervino Pérez: «Se devía tomar a encargar reziamente al señor don Juan que procure por quantos medios humanos huviere el concierto», insistía el secretario, y para conseguir un mayor efecto, apeló a una alarmante teoría del dominó: con una guerra de destrucción «se podrán recobrar poco de los Estados, y temer mucho que todos los estados vezinos, y toda Alemania, se bolverán contra las armas de

Vuestra Magestad, y cada uno a procurar de coger su pedaço de los Estados, como cosa perdida». Por otra parte, continuaba imparable, el rey debía recordar «los grandes peligros que correría todo lo de acá y de Italia», y «aún era de temer que no se cansassen estos reynos de verse desangrados por cosa tan perdida». El mensaje estaba claro: en Flandes «es menester no llegar a la rotura, sino durar en los tratos». El rey aceptó de mala gana esta reprimenda: «Todo esto fue bien dicho y considerado», admitía, «y ojalá no tuviera tanta razón en ella». [596]

Por tanto, Felipe ordenó a don Juan (como había instado a Pérez y a «los Dos») que evitara la reanudación de las hostilidades a toda costa. «No sé yo cómo se podría proveer tal suma» —los 500.000 ducados al mes para Flandes—, escribió a su medio hermano, «aunque no huviesse ninguna otra cosa en que gastarlo que ay sino esta; y siendo la impossibilidad para lo de la guerra tan grande, por estar todo tan gastado y consumido, es fuerza que la voluntad se conforme con la poder».[597]

Tal y como sucedió, el rey luchó con su conciencia en vano; la decisión ya estaba tomada. El 12 de febrero de 1577, el mismo día en que Felipe le escribió, don Juan firmó con los Estados de los Países Bajos un acuerdo, llamado el Edicto Perpetuo, por el que se confirmaba la Pacificación de Gante, y luego ordenó a Escobedo saldar cuentas con los tercios españoles para que pudieran salir del país en el plazo de un mes, como el edicto requería. Pero temía que, una vez fuera las tropas españolas, los flamencos no obedecerían, y por eso pedía licencia a Felipe para volver a España. Según una carta indiscreta a Margarita, «hablando claro, he escrito que si no me se da, no abrá resoluçión que no tome, hasta dexarlo todo y yrme allá, aunque sea a ser castigado, porque lo seré sin culpa, y aquí con ella me perdiera», y que «si en esto ubiere alguna

dificultad, solo tendré paciencia hasta agosto o setiembre».[598]

El Edicto Perpetuo incluía una clausula sorprendente: don Juan había concedido que los tercios españoles se retiraran por tierra, pero no por mar, anulando de esta manera el instrumento decisivo para la conquista de Inglaterra. Esta concesión reflejaba la llegada a su pequeña corte de un grupo de exiliados católicos ingleses e irlandeses, incluido el omnipresente Thomas Stukeley. Juntos, discutían estrategias alternativas para derrocar a Isabel Tudor en favor de don Juan, y Stukeley convenció a este de que, aun sin los tercios, él podía organizar una invasión que llegara a buen fin con cinco mil soldados llevados desde Italia en una flota pagada por el papa. Don Juan se uniría con ellos justo antes del desembarco. Una vez firmado el Edicto Perpetuo, Stukeley partió para Roma, llevando consigo una carta de compromiso firmada por don Juan y copias de otras cartas de don Juan a Felipe y Pérez pidiendo su apoyo para la Empresa de Stukeley. Gregorio XIII confirmaba en una carta que «deseaba sumamente que Vuestra Alteza sea el cabo de la Empresa» y le suplicaba «comenzar a pensar» en una estrategia apropiada «para [la] que Su Santidad podría con certitud de éxito preparar también todo lo que de su parte tendría a hacer». También mandó al nuncio Ormanetto que obtuviese el consentimiento de Felipe para este plan, y que permitiera el envío de un nuncio especial a Flandes que facilitase la distribución de dinero papal para la Empresa.[599]

Como los ambiciosos y vanos planes de Roberto Ridolfi pocos años antes *(véase capítulo 11)*, este proyecto carecía de fundamento. Stukeley no tenía los recursos para reclutar y mantener cinco mil soldados, cuanto más una flota para llevarlo desde Italia hasta Irlanda o Inglaterra. Y aun si la Armada papal llegara a su destino, «el éxito depende —como admitió Ormanetto— principalmente de que los católicos de Inglaterra se levantaran cuando vean llegar nuestra armada»; pero nadie

había orquestado un levantamiento de estos católicos.[600] Finalmente, pensar que don Juan pudiera salir de Flandes en cualquier momento, y en secreto, para juntarse con los aventureros de Stukeley cuando llegaran de Italia, era pura fantasía.

Sin embargo, cuando Ormanetto le mencionó a Felipe, durante una audiencia en abril de 1577, la invasión prevista por Gregorio, le halló «constante y firme en su compromiso para la Empresa, porque se halla con modo de poderla tentar con razonable esperanza de éxito».[601] Ormanetto aún no sabía que uno de los agentes secretos de Felipe en Estambul había acordado una tregua de un año en la guerra del Mediterráneo con el sultán otomano; ni tampoco que, en los Países Bajos, Escobedo había recaudado dinero suficiente para persuadir a los veteranos españoles de que volvieran a Italia. Esto permitió que don Juan entrara en Bruselas, donde, el 5 de mayo de 1577, prestó juramento como gobernador general, reiterando su promesa de cumplir todas las condiciones del Edicto Perpetuo. A cambio, los Estados de todas las provincias, salvo Holanda y Zelanda, reconocieron a Felipe como su soberano una vez más. A pesar de todos los retrasos y errores, parecía que don Juan había concluido con éxito la primera parte de su misión.

Sin embargo, en su afán de convertirse en el próximo rey de Inglaterra, don Juan (como Pérez y Escobedo) había pasado por alto un hecho capital: al igual que él, los Estados habían firmado sin llevar a cabo todas las consultas necesarias. Aunque el príncipe de Orange y sus partidarios en Holanda y Zelanda habían ratificado la Pacificación de Gante, no tenían delegados en las negociaciones de los Estados con don Juan. Por tanto, no habían podido insistir en las garantías para las libertades religiosas y políticas por las que habían luchado, pero sí podían rechazar el Edicto Perpetuo. Felipe reparó en este fatal error nada más leer el texto. Por un momento, el descuido se le fue

de la cabeza —«otra cosa pensava escribiros desto de Flandes, y no se me puede acordar agora», se disculpaba ante Pérez—, pero luego se acordó. «Agora se me acuerdo lo que se me holvidaba: y es que entiendo que no se ha de poner en la ratificación lo concertado con el príncipe de Orange, sino solo lo que entre my hermano y los estados».[602] En un intento de persuadir al príncipe de Orange para que aceptase el edicto, don Juan ofreció su garantía personal de que le serían devueltas las tierras confiscadas y del regreso de su hijo mayor, apresado y enviado a España como rehén en 1567 (dos promesas que solo Felipe, y no él, podía cumplir). También envió negociadores a la villa de Geertruidenberg para establecer con el príncipe y los diputados de Holanda y Zelanda las condiciones para firmar el Edicto Perpetuo y desmovilizar sus fuerzas armadas, y de esta manera conseguir que «lo dessos estados esté todo quieto y llano, y que no aya en ellos ningún género de embaraço», con el fin de juntarse con Stukeley y su tropas en la costa de Inglaterra. Pero pronto se descubrió que aquellos no aceptarían otra cosa que la plena libertad religiosa, garantizada por gobiernos extranjeros. «Para decir la verdad», informó Orange a los representantes de don Juan, «nos damos cuenta de que vuestro deseo es extirparnos, y nosotros no deseamos ser extirpados».[603]

La intransigencia de Orange en Geertruidenberg originó un hecho curioso: ¡él y sus partidarios habían interceptado y descifrado todas las cartas de don Juan y de Escobedo para el rey y Pérez, y el príncipe las había compartido con Isabel! Por tanto, ambos pudieron leer afirmaciones de don Juan tales como: «Si trato y he tratado lo de Inglaterra, ha sido el principal fundamento ver que ninguna cosa conviene tanto al servicio de Vuestra Magestad como reducir aquello a la obediencia de la Iglesia y tenerlo puesto en persona que le sirva como yo».[604] Las cartas revelaban que don Juan estaba

dispuesto a aceptar cualquier condición para un acuerdo en los Países Bajos, por abusiva que fuera, a fin de dejar libre el camino para la Empresa de Inglaterra. Su única alternativa sería retomar la guerra, una opción que Orange sabía, gracias a las cartas interceptadas, que Felipe jamás aprobaría. Entonces el príncipe, apoyado por Isabel, pedía todo lo que quería, confiado en que lo obtendría. Pero cometió un error muy grave: no tuvo en cuenta el carácter de don Juan, con su fuerte inclinación a la acción unilateral.

Tras el fracaso de las conversaciones en Geertruidenberg, don Juan resolvió declarar la guerra a Orange y sus aliados, calculando que esto no solo obligaría a Felipe a convocarlo a España, sino que también distraería a Isabel mientras Stukeley y sus soldados arribaban a Inglaterra y liberaban a María Estuardo. Don Juan abandonó Bruselas y convenció al agente papal de que emplease el dinero que había traído de Roma para la Empresa en conseguir más tropas alemanas; avisaron a los tercios españoles que acababan de partir para que regresaran; y envió cartas al papa y a los ministros del rey en Italia en las que exponía su nuevo plan y les pedía su apoyo. También envió a Escobedo a la corte, con órdenes de asegurar el regreso de las tropas extranjeras o bien obtener el permiso para volver a España y unirse allí a la expedición de Stukeley. Escobedo llegó a su tierra natal por última vez el 21 de julio de 1577. Tres días más tarde, al igual que había firmado unilateralmente la paz con los Estados sin esperar la aprobación de Felipe, don Juan les declaró de igual manera la guerra.

¿Paz o guerra?

La respuesta inicial de Felipe a este asombroso acto de desobediencia fue enviar correos a sus ministros en Italia, prohibiéndoles que cumplieran las órdenes de don Juan sobre el regreso de los tercios o de los agentes de sus banqueros: «No lo

haga por agora, aunque mi hermano se lo aya ordenado, porque assí conviene a mi servicio, y que no vean los de aquellos países acudir allá españoles y personas de negocios, por las sombras y sospechas que les causara». Felipe también dictó una larga y amarga reprimenda para su medio hermano: ¿cómo podía olvidar don Juan que «sobre todo yo deseo y mi voluntad es que por este camino [de la blandura] se reduzgan essos estados, y que se escuse a venir a la rotura y guerra abierta con ellos y de volver a meter en essos países la gente extrangera por la prueua grande que se tiene de lo poco que ha aprovechado todo lo passado?». Así pues, bramaba el rey,

> no conviene en ninguna manera que se llegue a rompimiento de la guerra abierta contra essos estados sin comunicación y orden particular mía, sino que se lleve el camino que arriba está dicho; y que quando las cosas llegassen a tal extremo, me aviséis del estado dellas para que yo pueda resolver lo que convenga según él en que estuvieren las cosas de los otros mis reynos.[605]

A pesar de estas palabras tremendas e inequívocas, escritas el 28 de agosto de 1577, en el curso de una semana Felipe dio un giro de ciento ochenta grados y autorizó la reanudación de la guerra en los Países Bajos, uno de los más sorprendentes y fatídicos cambios de su largo reinado. El giro se inició tres días más tarde, cuando Felipe firmó una serie de cartas ordenando a sus ministros en Italia que iniciaran los preparativos para enviar a los veteranos españoles de regreso a los Países Bajos en cuanto él diera la orden. También ordenó a sus ministros debatir sobre cuál sería la mejor manera de resolver la situación en los Países Bajos, pero, en esta ocasión, en lugar de consultar solo con «los Dos», como de costumbre, pidió la opinión del Consejo de Estado al completo. Quiroga hizo una oferta final para asegurar la aprobación de la Empresa de Inglaterra —«Tengo por cierto que la causa de todos estos males es la reyna de Inglaterra; y que si esta tuviesse en qué entender en su casa, dexaría de reboluer las aguas»—, pero todos los demás consejeros recomendaron que se reanudara la guerra, y que la campaña comenzase de

inmediato.[606]

El rey se dio cuenta de que no podría organizar una gran campaña contra los holandeses si también debía combatir en el Mediterráneo, por lo que envió a su agente secreto de nuevo a Estambul con la orden de prolongar la tregua. Confiado en que el sultán estaría de acuerdo, el 11 de septiembre de 1577 firmó las órdenes para el regreso de los tercios. Hizo una sola salvedad: «Deis a todos a entender en general y particular», le encargaba a don Juan, «que no se toma este camino para alterar ninguna cosa de lo que últimamente se havía assentado y concertado» en el Edicto Perpetuo, «sino que vuestra intención es guardar y cumplir inviolablemente por vuestra parte todo aquello». Ese mismo día, mandaba que sus ministros escribieran a todos los obispos y alcaldes «volviéndolos a encargar la oración por las causas públicas pues ay tanta necesidad dello, y que atiendan con mucho cuidado a la enmienda y castigo de los pecados» porque «ya veis quanto conviene que todos procuremos de aplacar a nuestro señor que, según lo que parece, le devemos tener muy ofendido con nuestras culpas».[607]

En los Países Bajos, los Estados Generales enviaron su ejército contra don Juan, e invitaron a sus colegas de Holanda y Zelanda a unirse a ellos en Bruselas. El príncipe de Orange volvió victorioso a la capital, de la que había huido una década antes, y donde (según informaba don Juan, enojado) «ha sido reçiuido como el Mexías, y con su pareçer embiaron sus diputados con nuevas demandas tan fuera de toda razón». Don Juan interpretó que esto significaba «que estos [flamencos] no quieren paz, ni Dios ni Rey». No obstante, siguió las órdenes de Felipe y concedió todas las demandas de los Estados Generales, incluso su retirada a Luxemburgo. Ese mismo mes, en Francia, los líderes católicos y protestantes firmaron la Paz de Bergerac, que ponía fin a la guerra civil, abriendo el camino para una intervención armada de los protestantes franceses en

Flandes. Estaba «en este laverinthio» cuando don Juan recibió la noticia «de la determinación de Su Magestad» de que los tercios veteranos volviesen y que la lucha recomenzara. La nueva, dijo, «me ha resuçitado de muerto a vivo». Inmediatamente empezó a reclutar tropas por todas partes. Incluso pidió al duque de Guisa no solo que liberara a los aventureros españoles que le habían servido en su ejército durante la guerra civil, sino que le permitiera también reclutar un regimiento de infantería francesa.[608]

Según recordaría más adelante Pérez, la noticia de estos contactos entre «don Juan [y] Mos. de Guisa, y las escondidas y estadas en su retrete», solo le llegó indirectamente al rey, y «viendo que desto» ni don Juan ni Escobedo «no dauan quenta ni de nada, se sospechó mucho».[609] Con las tropas bajo su mando una vez más, don Juan se volvió aún menos razonable, exigiendo que Felipe le proporcionara otro millón de ducados al contado, seguidos de otras entregas a plazos regulares. «Acuérdese Vuestra Magestad», añadió con bastante insolencia, «la provisión que truxo el duque de Alba y los que después le hizieron; y considere quanto mayor es esta necessidad que aquella». Y concluía aún más groseramente: «Vuestra Magestad me mande responder con brevedad». Para conseguir esta meta, urgía a Escobedo —todavía en la corte— que mantuviera la presión sobre Felipe, mientras que su aliado, Quiroga, insistió en que entonces más que nunca la Empresa era necesaria «para el bien de la Cristiandad y para que los malos sean castigados para exemplo del mundo». Pero el rey contestó ominosamente: «El negocio [la Empresa de Inglaterra] tiene con ellas mayores dificultades, y así converná myrarlo mucho. Y que vos vais pensando en ello; que yo hago y haré lo mysmo».[610]

Por el momento, Escobedo y Quiroga prevalecieron en su otra meta. La llegada de una remesa de plata americana insólitamente grande permitió al rey concluir por fin, en

diciembre de 1577, un Medio General con los más importantes asentistas cuyo capital él mismo había congelado por el decreto de suspensión dos años antes. Felipe reconoció que debía casi quince millones de ducados a sus banqueros para los asientos firmados entre 1560 y 1575; y vendió tierras de la iglesia (con licencia del papa) y asignó juros hasta el valor de dos tercios de esa suma. Los asentistas, por su parte, aceptaron esta reducción forzada de sus pretensiones y, además, se comprometieron a sustentar los ejércitos y las armadas españolas en Flandes y en Italia con otros cinco millones de ducados, librados en plazos regulares, a lo largo de 1578 y 1579. El rey insistía en que su política hacia los flamencos no había cambiado. Como explicó en una carta fechada el 24 de enero de 1578: «Mi fin ni intención no es su castigo ni ruyna sino que se reduzgan a la obediencia de Dios y mía y que cumpliendo ellos con estos dos puntos, como los han prometido cessen las armas y buelban las cosas al estado en que estaban en tiempo del emperador mi señor, que está en el cielo, con olvido de todo lo pasado».[611] Pero una semana más tarde, don Juan y su creciente ejército derrotaron de forma aplastante a sus enemigos en la batalla de Gembloux, y luego tomaron Lovaina, una ciudad a solo veinticinco kilómetros de Bruselas. Orange y los Estados Generales huyeron al norte. El vencedor podía soñar de nuevo con invadir Inglaterra, y exigió a Felipe que le enviara a Escobedo de vuelta con instrucciones que le autorizaran a dar este paso y con suficiente dinero al contado como para conseguirlo. En cambio, Felipe autorizó a Antonio Pérez para que acabara con Juan de Escobedo.

14. ¿Un rey asesino?

Madrid, calle de la Almudena, noche del 31 de marzo de 1578

Era el lunes de Pascua. A las nueve de la noche, Juan de Escobedo, antiguo secretario de Hacienda de Felipe II y por aquel entonces emisario personal de don Juan de Austria, iba «a caballo y pensando» por lo que hoy es la calle de la Almudena en Madrid, acompañado de dos criados y un paje que portaban antorchas. Había estado «gran rato, hasta ser de noche», en casa de doña Ana de Mendoza, princesa de Éboli y viuda de Ruy Gómez de Silva. Acabada la visita, mientras se encaminaba a su aposento, un grupo de seis facinerosos le atacaron por sorpresa y uno de ellos «le mató de una sola estocada que atravesó su cuerpo de lado a lado» con «una espada ligera, de la marca de Castilla». Escobedo cayó de su montura y se desangró sobre el suelo hasta morir, antes de que le diera tiempo a confesarse. Los testigos del hecho trataron de prender a los atacantes, que «dejaron un arcabuz, un puñal y un ferrarolo», y dos de ellos perdieron sus capas en la refriega, pero al final todos escaparon en la oscuridad sin poder ser reconocidos.[612]

Felipe estaba en San Lorenzo de El Escorial para celebrar la Pascua de Resurrección cuando recibió una nota de Mateo Vázquez, a primera hora de la mañana siguiente, en la que este le comunicaba la noticia del asesinato. Respondió: «Fue muy bien embiarme luego lo d[e] Escobedo, que vi en la cama, porque muy poco después vino don Diego de Córdoba con la nueva, que a sido estraña». Su Majestad escogió una palabra llamativa: «Estraña». Por una parte, aunque la violencia callejera era habitual en Madrid, como observó un embajador italiano, «no se suele ver asesinatos similares». Por otra parte, el asesinato de tan notable figura dejó perplejo a todo el mundo:

Escobedo tenía «en pecho todos los instrucciones y secretos» del rey y de su hermano, a pesar de lo cual una banda bien organizada le había tendido una emboscada y asesinado en una callejuela a escasa distancia del Alcázar.[613] ¡Era más que «estraña»!

Escobedo ya había sido objeto de un intento de asesinato, por envenenamiento, a consecuencia del cual una esclava morisca de su casa había sido juzgada y ejecutada. El destino de esta hacía aún más sorprendente que nadie fuera acusado, y mucho menos castigado, por haberle dado una estocada en la calle. Para Orazio Maleguzzi, embajador del duque de Ferrara, ahí radicaba el gran misterio: a pesar de la «rigidísima inquisición», escribió dos semanas después del asesinato, «no se ha podido haber una mínima indicación de los autores de esta desgracia». Y, sin embargo, reflexionaba, sería «casi imposible que un malhechor esté oculto, cuanto menos cuando tantos han intervenido a este efecto».[614]

Maleguzzi tenía razón: era «imposible»; de hecho, para cuando él escribía estas frases, los seis asesinos habían escapado de Madrid y alcanzado tierras de Aragón, donde estaban a salvo de los magistrados castellanos gracias a la ayuda de varias personas prominentes. La princesa de Éboli, en cuya casa Escobedo pasó sus últimas horas, proporcionó a uno de los homicidas el título «de cobrador o administrador de su hacienda, para que si le topasen y preguntasen algo lo mostrase». Antonio Pérez ayudó a dos más, entregándoles más de cien escudos de oro a cada uno, mientras que a los otros tres les facilitó «una cédula y carta firmada de Su Majestad, de veinte escudos de entretenimiento [al mes], con título de alférez» en uno de los presidios españoles en Italia. Aunque los receptores de estos documentos manifestaron su preocupación acerca de si las cédulas eran auténticas y habían sido debidamente inscritas en el Libro de Registro, cada uno recibió

la recompensa prometida cuando llegó a Italia. La razón era sencilla: Pérez había organizado el asesinato de Escobedo y la huida de los malhechores con la aprobación de Felipe.

El «consentimiento» del rey

El rey admitió su implicación en 1589, cuando ordenó procesar a Pérez por su responsabilidad en la muerte de Escobedo y mandó a sus jueces que averiguaran «las causas que hubo» para que su antiguo secretario «interviniese y diese orden en ella y las que hubo para que Su Magestad lo haya consentido». Cuando los jueces le informaron de que Pérez rehusaba hacerlo, el rey le envió un billete ológrafo en el que le «mandaba declarase las causas que había habido para que Su Majestad diese su consentimiento a la muerte del secretario Escobedo», añadiendo: «A mi satisfaçión, y a la de mi conçiençia, conviene saber si estas causas fueron bastantes o no».[615]

¿Cuáles fueron exactamente las causas que llevaron al Rey Católico a dar su consentimiento al asesinato? ¿Y por qué se decidió en 1589, y no antes, que «conviene saber si estas causas fueron bastantes o no»? Lamentablemente para los historiadores, ninguno de los protagonistas explicó en aquel entonces qué les convenció de que Escobedo debía morir. Dos de los asesinos hicieron declaraciones juradas algunos años después, pero sus testimonios contenían importantes contradicciones. Pérez guardó silencio hasta que en 1590, tras ocho vueltas de cordel, pidió a sus jueces «que le quiten de cómo está, que le den una ropa» y que entonces «cuanto quisieren» diría. Entonces reveló tanto las negociaciones clandestinas llevadas a cabo por Escobedo y don Juan con el papa y el duque de Guisa como ¡que Escobedo y don Juan habían planeado derrocar al rey y su gobierno! Según Pérez, Escobedo le había dicho que, una vez «hechos señores de Inglaterra», él y su amo «vendrían a ganar a España y a echar a

Su Magestad de ella; y esto tratado todo con términos de mucho menospreçio de la persona de Su Magestad». También sacó a la luz la copia de una carta en que Escobedo instaba a Pérez para «que por un camino o por otro, el rey huelgue y tenga por servido» que don Juan saliera de Flandes, porque

> aviendo visto con la sagaçidad, prudençia y cordura con que Su Alteza se a gobernado en estos negocios, parece que es suxeto en quien caue este lugar y que, como dice la Escritura, fue Dios servido por su cristiandad de dársele para báculo de su vejez. Que aunque aquí y en cualquier parte servirá [don Juan] mucho, en ninguna tanto como cerca de Su Magestad para desde allí gobernarlo todo.[616]

Pérez afirmó que había compartido esta extraordinaria información con el marqués de Los Vélez, quien, «habiendo entendido todo esto y viendo algunos papeles de lo que arriba está dicho, [le] pareçió ser peligroso hombre y que convenía desviarle del señor don Juan». El marqués de Los Vélez también afirmó, continuaba Pérez, «que, viendo la detención de la gente en Flandes y las ynuenciones de [E]scouedo y lo demás dicho: pareció que sy este [Escobedo] boluía» a los Países Bajos «rebolvería el mundo; sy se prendía (que lo quiso hazer Su Magestad) se alteraría don Juan, y que lo mejor era tomar otro expediente, darle un bocado o cosa tal: que así paresció a Vélez». Estas, concluía el antiguo secretario, «fueron las causas principales de que advirtió a Su Magestad» por qué Escobedo debía morir; y, sobre esta base, Felipe dio su consentimiento para matarle de forma extrajudicial.[617]

Solo un documento contemporáneo confirma alguna de estas importantes afirmaciones: una nota ológrafa, hasta ahora desconocida, escrita por el duque de Alba a un aliado en la corte en septiembre de 1577, cuando el Consejo de Estado debatió la petición de don Juan de que su sobrino, Alejandro Farnesio, príncipe de Parma, se uniera a él en los Países Bajos.

> El señor don Juan le quiere [a Parma] para en viendo el agujero, y aun quiera Dios no sea antes, dexarle allí en su lugar y venirse. Y es consejo que de acá le an dado para venirse sin sperar licencia de Su Magestad, y que aquí es donde le

> conviene estar, governando los negocios de Su Magestad. Y vuestra merced me la hará [una merced] de dezir a Su Magestad que yo le digo lo que ay. Que Su Magestad hará lo que le conviene. Pero sepa que lo que le digo es verdad. No puedo más. Que si pudiera, bien obiera que dezir en la materia.[618]

Es decir, que a los oídos de Alba habían llegado rumores de que algunos cortesanos (fuera Pérez u otro) deseaban que don Juan volviese a España para «gobernar los negocios de Su Magestad», precisamente como el secretario insistiría más tarde, y que el rey estaba enterado.

Aunque carecemos de confirmaciones contemporáneas similares, otras dos subsiguientes afirmaciones de Pérez parecen plausibles: la intervención del marqués de Los Vélez, puesto que él era uno de los otros dos ministros a los que Felipe consultó la manera de manejar a su hermano, y la insistencia del marqués en que Escobedo debía ser envenenado en secreto en lugar de detenido abiertamente (lo que revelaría a don Juan que el rey había descubierto el complot). Por otra parte, hay numerosas evidencias de que Felipe no se oponía a autorizar el asesinato de quienes estaba convencido que lo habían traicionado. Prometió una generosa recompensa a quien acabara con el príncipe Guillermo de Orange (que se pagaría debidamente a la familia del ejecutor) y, más tarde, con el propio Antonio Pérez; y había hecho asesinar en secreto a varios ministros menores cuando estuvo convencido de su culpabilidad.[619]

Felipe quizá fue persuadido de que debía creer lo peor sobre su hermano. Como un embajador había afirmado años antes, «el rey sufre de la misma enfermedad que su padre: es decir, la sospecha» *(véase capítulo 4)*, y el comportamiento de don Juan ofrecía sobrados motivos para desconfiar de él: viajes no autorizados a España; negociaciones secretas con el papa y con Guisa; decisiones unilaterales de alcanzar y a continuación romper un acuerdo con los flamencos. Todo ello sin duda

condujo a Felipe a pensar lo peor de su hermano y de Escobedo, y por eso, quizá, creía a Pérez cuando le aseguró que «vendrían a ganar a España y a echar a Su Magestad de ella». Pérez había trabajado en estrecha colaboración con Felipe durante toda su vida adulta, y sabía exactamente cómo sacar partido de los puntos débiles de su señor para obtener el consentimiento para el asesinato de Escobedo; probablemente nunca se sabrá cuál fue su papel en los intentos de envenenarlo. Tan solo el carácter publico de la ejecución y la misteriosa huida de sus autores revelaron la existencia de un complot premeditado.

El testimonio de dos de los asesinos —Diego Martínez y Antonio Enríquez, mayordomo y antiguo paje de Pérez respectivamente— nos ofrece la secuencia cronológica del camino de Escobedo hacia la muerte. El plan inicial, aprobado (según Pérez) por Los Vélez, era «darle un bocado, o cosa tal», y Martínez declaró que «por la Navidad del año de 77, tres meses más o menos antes que suçediese la muerte», Pérez le preguntó por primera vez «si habría modo como matase» a Escobedo. En esta ocasión, Martínez «le respondió que no sabía, y así se quedó por algunos días», pero, al poco tiempo, Pérez volvió a sacar el asunto y los dos anduvieron «comunicando algunos días de cómo se ejecutaría; y tratose de darle una bebida» la próxima vez que Escobedo cenara con Pérez. Martínez así lo hizo, pero «no hubo efecto», por lo que «después se trató de darle otra cosa, y se le dio, que fue echarle polvos en un puchero [en] que guisaban la comida de Escobedo» mientras cenaba con el secretario. «Tampoco hubo efecto», aunque Escobedo se sintió enfermo y se acostó; y por eso, Martínez entonces «dijo al dicho Antonio Pérez que era bien dejarlo, que no sabía para qué se haçía».[620]

Hasta este momento, al parecer, Pérez había evitado mencionar el consentimiento del rey para el asesinato. Pero

para convencer a Martínez de que llevase a cabo una tercera tentativa, le reveló entonces que «era fuerza que se hiçiese la muerte, porque convenía al serviçio de Su Magestad, y que así era menester buscar quien lo hiçiese», a lo que aquel replicó incrédulo:

> "¡Quién diablos se ha de atrever a hacerlo! Porque si los cogen y los prenden los han de ahorcar".
>
> Y el dicho Antonio Pérez respondió: "No harán [tal]: que cuando sean tan desgraçiados [que los prendieran] los que lo hiçieren, no peligrarán porque Su Magestad dará orden como sean salvos; y esto creed de mí".

Esto persuadió a Martínez de intentar administrarle nuevamente «un bocado» a Escobedo, esta vez sirviéndose de un galopín, Juan Rubio, que fue a la casa del secretario (donde este se encontraba todavía recuperándose del último intento de envenenamiento) y echó en una olla «un dedal de ciertos polvos que el dicho Diego Martínez le había dado». En esta ocasión, Escobedo se dio cuenta de lo que pasaba y acusó a la esclava morisca encargada de la olla de intento de asesinato. La esclava fue arrestada, torturada y ahorcada. Por tercera vez, Escobedo sobrevivió.[621]

Pérez tomó entonces la fatídica decisión «de llevarlo por otra vía, y fue que se buscase modo cómo una noche le matasen [a Escobedo] en la calle con pistolete o estocada o de otra suerte», y, a finales de enero de 1578, preguntó tanto a Martínez como a Enríquez si conocían a alguien «que quisiere dar una cuchillada a un hombre». Enríquez fue a Barcelona para reclutar a su hermanastro, mientras que Martínez localizó a un espadachín llamado Insausti dispuesto a perpetrar el acto. Todo esto llevó «cosa de un mes o mes y medio», de modo que no fue hasta Semana Santa cuando Martínez y sus cómplices «se juntaron todos fuera de Madrid en un campo, para conçertarse cómo se había de haçer la dicha muerte». Decidieron adquirir «una espada ligera, de la marca de Castilla»: el arma que, el lunes de Pascua, Insausti empuñaría

con resultado mortal en la calle de la Almudena.[622]

Si en torno a la Navidad de 1577 Felipe consintió «darle un bocado» a Escobedo, ¿es seguro que, unas semanas después, también aprobara la decisión de utilizar otro método de asesinato? Este cambio del plan era crucial. Los tres intentos de envenenar el secretario habían sido todos sorprendentemente fáciles de ocultar (la esclava morisca no solo confesó su culpa, sino que declaró a la fuerza que no había intentado matar a Escobedo, sino a su mujer, porque esta le pegaba); pero la contratación de seis hombres para concertar un asesinato en un día festivo, con una espada, en una de las zonas más populosas de la capital, constituía una estrategia de alto riesgo. A diferencia del envenenamiento, no dejaba lugar a la ocultación o a la ambigüedad; además, aunque tuvieran éxito, sería fácil capturar a uno o más de los asesinos (llegado el momento, dos tuvieron que escapar corriendo por las calles «en cuerpo, que había perdido la capa»), y, bajo tortura, era seguro que cualquier asesino revelaría que Pérez era quien los había contratado, a él y a sus socios, con el consentimiento del rey. Durante su «juicio del tribunal de Justicia» de Aragón en 1590, Pérez afirmó que fue tanto

> el cuidado que al rey le daba esta ejecución [de Escobedo], por la alteración y golpe que podía dar a don Juan aquel caso, que estaba concertado entre el rey y Antonio Pérez, muy en secreto, que si fuesen presos los ejecutores de la muerte de Escobedo, que él se la echase a cuestas y tomase la posta y huyese a Aragón, como malhechor.[623]

Aunque esta declaración, escrita muchos años después de los hechos, es el único testimonio directo de que el rey aprobó explícitamente el cambio de planes, otros dos acontecimientos ofrecen pruebas circunstanciales. Primero, poco antes del asesinato, Felipe, aparentemente, firmó las cédulas de alférez y de entretenimiento para tres de los asesinos: seis documentos en total, cada uno de ellos puntualmente copiados en el Libro de Registro. Segundo, en 1589, Pérez escribió varias angustiadas

cartas al rey cuando los hijos de Escobedo lograron localizar tanto a tres de los asesinos de su padre como al boticario Muñoz, que había preparado el veneno utilizado antes sin éxito. Pérez sugirió a Felipe «mandar a su confesor [fray Diego de Chaves] que mire el remedio de lo que puede suceder» porque, dado que estos hombres sabían «todo lo que hay en este negoçio, acertará mejor lo que conviene para que se excusen inconvenientes mayores, en daño del preso y nuestro, y del serviçio de Dios y de Vuestra Magestad». La yuxtaposición en estas cartas del nombre del boticario, uno de los implicados en el plan original de «darle un bocado» a Escobedo (que había contado con la aprobación del rey), y de los de tres de los implicados en su asesinato a espada, apunta a que el rey también había dado su visto bueno al nuevo plan.[624]

Este conjunto de pruebas, tanto directas como indirectas, aporta fuertes indicios de la complicidad de Felipe en todas las etapas del asesinato de Escobedo. Se había dejado convencer por Pérez de que don Juan y su secretario eran unos traidores; de que el asesinato de Escobedo, por cualquier medio, constituía la única forma de frustrar su traición —por inverosímil que esa traición nos pueda parecer hoy— y, por último, de que el asesinato podría cometerse con una estocada en una callejuela de su capital.

Un crimen: cuatro motivos

Pero si Escobedo no tenía planes para derrocar a Felipe (y no tenemos ninguna prueba fiable de ello), ¿por qué estaba Pérez tan desesperado por asesinarle? ¿Qué otro motivo podría tener Pérez que prefería no compartir con el rey, ni entonces ni más adelante?

Aquellos que no simpatizaban con Pérez —y eran muchos— sugirieron que Escobedo había descubierto cierta información comprometedora sobre el secretario real que

condujo a su asesinato a fin de que no se la comunicara a Felipe. En resumen:

- Escobedo podía demostrar que Pérez aceptaba sobornos y dádivas o regalos; o
- Pérez había prometido «mucha merced» a Escobedo, y cuando el rey no lo aprobó, Escobedo culpó a Pérez; o
- Escobedo tenía pruebas de una relación clandestina entre Pérez y la princesa de Éboli; o
- Escobedo sabía que Pérez había engañado al rey sobre los planes de don Juan.

Cada una de estas amenazas teóricas requiere un cuidadoso análisis de los indicios y pruebas.

De la primera acusación, no hay duda de que Pérez era culpable. El secretario desarrolló unos gustos muy caros de los que hacía clara ostentación, tanto en su casa de la ciudad, situada en la plaza del Cordón, como en La Casilla, su villa campestre, cuya fastuosidad la convirtió en una atracción turística. Don Rodrigo de Castro, arzobispo de Sevilla, no albergaba dudas (basado en «lo que de ello ha visto») de que, en el «gasto de su persona y casa», Pérez gastaba «de quinçe a veinte mil ducados cada año; y este declarante se espantaba mucho de dónde podía Antonio Pérez suplirlo, no siendo sus gajes más de los que tiene con su oficio».[625] La lógica de la afirmación de don Rodrigo era evidente: como mínimo, algunos de los fondos con los que financiaba su pródigo estilo de vida procedían de dádivas. De ello existen abundantes ejemplos. Así, un día en 1579, Luigi Dovara, el embajador toscano, «fue a casa del señor Antonio Pérez» y le entregó una carta del Gran Duque. El secretario le dijo que, «por quedar asuntos para negociar, quería que esta mañana él y yo solos tenemos que reunirnos a su casa de campo, donde tendría que

hablar conmigo». Cuando Dovara llegó a La Casilla, muy de mañana,

> he hallado que [Pérez] se vestía, pero me hizo entrar e hizo a todos los otros salir. Le dijo que a Vuestra Alteza no le gustaba a modo alguno de no haber ya una parte a las delicias de su casa del campo, et que por esto le mandaba estos regalos, que yo le doy, habiendo puesto los 2.000 escudos en dos bolsas, embaladas en mis calzones.

Parece improbable que un embajador con dos bolsas, cada una con mil monedas de oro, embaladas en sus calzones, hubiera pasado inadvertido por las calles de Madrid incluso a primera hora de la mañana. Estos sobornos tan a las claras —de los cuales existieron muchas otras pruebas— hacen que parezca improbable que Pérez necesitara matar a Escobedo simplemente para que sus dádivas no llegaran a conocimiento del rey. ¡Muchas otras personas también estaban al tanto de ellas![626]

La segunda razón propuesta para el asesinato de Escobedo era más específica. En una de sus cartas del 8 de abril de 1576, Pérez (con permiso del rey) le prometía a Escobedo «mucha merced» si convencía a don Juan para que fuera a Flandes *(véase capítulo 13)*. Parece que don Juan tenía noticia de este compromiso porque escribió a su hermano sobre el tema muchas veces. Por ejemplo: «Escobedo, sobre tantos años y serviçios, nuevos caminos y tan continuos malos tratos, en verdad señor que con más que ábito deue Vuestra Magestad pagárselo, y hazerme a mí esta merced, que le vuelvo a suplicar». En abril de 1577 Pérez planteó la materia diligentemente a Felipe en dos billetes distintos, pero el rey respondió: «Es muy conforme a my humor, que huelgo mucho más de hazer por los que no me importunan que no por los que lo hazen», y decidió no conceder ninguna recompensa al secretario de su hermano «por agora». Pérez dejó correr el asunto hasta que Escobedo regresó a la corte en julio de 1577, pero luego avisó a Felipe: «Terrible está Escobedo en lo del

ábito como verá Vuestra Magestad, y como amenaza. Cierto creo que converná venírsele a dar porque no mate a Vuestra Magestad». Cuatro meses después, don Juan movilizó al cardenal Quiroga, quien entregó con su aprobación otra carta suya en la que suplicaba a Felipe que le concediera un hábito a Escobedo. Pero todos estos esfuerzos resultaron infructuosos: «En esto myraré a su tiempo lo que converná», declaró el rey secamente. De esta manera, según parece, zanjó el asunto. Sin duda, Escobedo se sentía decepcionado al no recibir la «mucha merced» prometida, pero sabía bien, como lo sabían todos los demás, que solo el rey —y no Pérez— decidía quién había de recibir hábitos y encomiendas. Por eso, habría culpado al rey y no al ministro; y, por tanto, «las causas que me dijo [Pérez] que había para» matar a Escobedo seguramente no podrían incluir «lo del hábito».[627]

¿Y un amorío con la princesa de Éboli? Escobedo mantenía una postura muy clara al respecto. En una ocasión en que visitó la residencia madrileña de doña Ana:

> Le deçía su camarera que no la podía hablar; y que preguntándole Escobedo que ¿"quién estaba con ella"? le decían que estaba con la dicha princesa el secretario Antonio Pérez; y que una vez se había enojado el dicho Escobedo y dicho "¿Qué negoçios tiene mi señora la princesa con Antonio Pérez y que no puedo entrar yo allá?".

Debido a las estrictas normas del decoro que se esperaba de las viudas en Castilla, y especialmente de las viudas de los grandes, la pregunta no carecía en absoluto de sentido. Escobedo le reprochó a la princesa «que algunos miraban [mal] algunas entradas y salidas de Antonio Pérez». Ella le replicó con enojo «que era [Escobedo] un suçio, que los escuderos no se habían de meter en aquellas cosas». Resultaba notable que Escobedo fuese asesinado poco después, mientras volvía a su casa tras una entrevista con la princesa.[628]

Pero si Pérez planeó el asesinato de Escobedo para evitar

que descubriera un amorío con la princesa, cabría esperar que hubiera reducido la frecuencia y la duración de sus visitas al aposento de esta. En cambio, ocurrió lo contrario: sus visitas en solitario llegaron a ser más frecuentes. El marqués de la Favara, primo hermano de Ruy Gómez, declaró que el secretario «la visitaba muy a menudo y algunas veçes estaba muchas horas con ella» y afirmó haber visto «cosas muy peores que le pareçe no conveniente deçirlas; basta que el trato entre los dos no era bueno». Esto sugiere que ni Pérez ni la princesa habrían arreglado la muerte de Escobedo para evitar sospechas de una relación, puesto que había tantas personas a quienes «no le pareçían bien los tratos» entre ellos.[629]

Queda el último posible motivo de Pérez para querer matar a Escobedo: que, rozando la traición, ambos hubiesen conspirado, con la complicidad de don Juan, para engañar al rey. El mismísimo Pérez lo admitió durante su interrogatorio, explicando a sus jueces que «esta manera de cartas y inteligençia pasaba de ordinario entre Escobedo y este declarante, como que Su Magestad no sabía lo que entre ellos pasaba; pero este declarante daba cuenta y mostraba todo lo que le escribían y pasaban con él». Más adelante, repitió que «tenía orden suya [del rey], y de su mano, de escribirse con Escobedo con tanta confianza para asegurarle y descubrir sus andamientos, que pareçiese entenderse los dos sin sabiduría de Su Magestad; y entre sus papeles pudiera hallar billetes de Su Magestad en que le aprueba el término y le diçe de su mano ser aquello lo que conviene y que así se haga».[630]

Algunos de estos «billetes de Su Magestad […] en su mano» se han conservado. Así, en marzo de 1576, Pérez avisó a Escobedo sobre la existencia de dos cartas de don Juan, aunque «me resolví de no mostrarlas a su Magestad»,

> en que aprieta mucho el mal estado de las cosas de allá y carga al marqués de Mondéjar [virrey de Nápoles] en su manera de proceder, que me parecieron tan

rezias y tan rigurosas, assí por el término y forma dellas en el encarescimiento del estado de las cosas, como por hablar en una dellas Su Alteza mal de la persona del marqués, cosa no digna de quien lo escrive, ni a quien se escrive.

Pérez devolvió esas dos cartas sin que, aparentemente, hubiesen llegado a manos del rey. No obstante, Felipe no solo había leído ambas, sino que también había aprobado personalmente el engaño como una forma de convencer a Escobedo y a don Juan para que confiasen con seguridad todos sus secretos a Pérez.[631] Esto solo desmuestra que Pérez en algunas ocasiones le «reveló y mostró todo» lo que había tratado con Escobedo, pero no que lo hiciera siempre. Otros documentos explican una historia muy diferente. Así, algunos meses después de la muerte de Escobedo, Pérez informó jovialmente al embajador español en París, Juan de Vargas Mexía, muy próximo a don Juan, que sus últimas cartas «son de mucha satisfacción a nuestro amo, el cual las ve todas, digo las que conuiene». En otra carta, Pérez daba instrucciones a Vargas: «Importame mucho que V.M. me remita esse despacho al señor Don Juan en esta forma, que diga que le ha recibido con una carta mia de XII de mayo y muy encomendado de mi […]. Y procure V. M. que vaya con alguna occasion aunque sea despachando correo, antes que lleguen los despachos que lleva este correo para su Alteza».[632] Estas cartas originales, conservadas únicamente porque Vargas Mexía murió en París y confió sus papeles a los jesuitas del lugar, demuestran que Pérez no mostró a «nuestro amo» todo el correo que recibía, del mismo modo que no siempre le dijo a don Juan toda la verdad. Según la descriptiva frase atribuida a su amigo Quiroga, «Antonio Pérez quitó de los billetes los pares y daba los nones».[633]

Para acabar de incriminarlo, en su subversiva carta a Escobedo del 16 de abril de 1576, solo una semana después del paquete de cartas escritas para convencer a don Juan de que debía partir inmediatamente de Nápoles hacia Flandes, Pérez

declaró que don Juan solo debería «partirse para Lombardía» y pararse allí para ver si sería «buena la ida a Flandes» o no *(véase capítulo 13)*. Escobedo, entonces, tenía al menos una manera de chantajear a Pérez, y por eso parece posible que, en torno a la Navidad de 1577, después de cinco meses de infructuosa espera en Madrid, o bien Escobedo comentara a Pérez que, a menos que recibiera la aprobación real para la empresa, le mostraría al rey aquella carta (y tal vez otras); o bien Pérez, sabiendo que el rey nunca daría su aprobación, temía que esa amenaza pudiese materializarse en un próximo futuro. Dado que cualquiera de las dos cosas terminaría con su carrera, y quizá con su vida, Pérez tenía muchos incentivos para fabricar cartas comprometedoras de don Juan y de Escobedo para persuadir al rey de que diera su consentimiento al asesinato.

La venganza de Escobedo

Al principio pareció que Pérez saldría impune del asesinato: la «espada ligera, de la marca de Castilla», funcionó perfectamente en la calle de la Almudena; los seis asesinos huyeron a Aragón; las recompensas que recibieron fueron suficientes para garantizar su silencio. Don Juan buscaba la venganza, pero murió el 1 de octubre, reduciendo la presión para investigar quién había asesinado a Escobedo. Sin embargo, el problema se negaba a desaparecer, en buena medida por el extraordinario comportamiento del propio Pérez. Ciertamente, tomó algunas precauciones elementales al enterarse de que don Juan podía estar enfermo de gravedad. Escribió una carta ológrafa al nuevo secretario privado de don Juan acerca de «mis cartas»: «Suplico a vuesamerced que hasta que yo le avise otra cosa las tenga muy a recaudo, sin que las vea nadie, que yo avisaré lo que se hará dellas, aunque por agora lo más seguro me parece que vuesamerced las tenga en su poder muy guardadas, y lo mismo las de Escobedo».[634] En cambio, su comportamiento en España

no mostraba ninguna prudencia e, irónicamente, al final, fue eso —más que las dádivas, la correspondencia secreta o la planificación de un asesinato— lo que causó su destrucción. La suya y la de la princesa de Éboli.

Dado su parentesco y larga asociación con Escobedo, resulta llamativo que Ana de Mendoza no hubiera compartido la indignación general en el momento de su asesinato, ni rogado con insistencia al rey que encontrase a los malhechores. En cambio, se dedicó a embarcarse con Pérez en complejas operaciones (enviándole numerosos y costosos regalos y llevando a cabo inversiones financieras conjuntas tan complicadas que ni una investigación subsiguiente logró desentrañarlas); por recomendación de Pérez, nombró como su contador a uno de los asesinos de Escobedo, en tanto que designó a otro de ellos gobernador de sus propiedades en Italia; en julio de 1578, «estando con ella Antonio Pérez, llamó a sus hijos y les dixo que por algunas causas de consideración se havía callado lo que les diría, y fue que tuviesen a Antonio Pérez por hermano, como a hijo de su padre» Ruy Gómez, concebido antes de su matrimonio.[635] También se entrometió en la política de palacio. En mayo de 1578, dos meses después de la muerte de Escobedo, Mateo Vázquez se quejó al rey: «Es terrible cosa las inuençiones que se usan y los vandos; y por más que yo me encojo, para no darles qué pensar de mi [roto], no me dexan; y ya he apuntado algo a Vuestra Magestad de la ambición y modo de proceder del secretario que comunica mucho al marqués» (solo podía referirse a Pérez y a Los Vélez). Felipe hizo lo posible por aliviar este sentimiento:

> Como vos bayáis camyno derecho conmigo, y tengo por cierto que lo haréis, no ay que daros nada de nada, que no ay tal así para lo de Dios como por lo del mundo como cerrar los oýdos y aun los ojos para no oír; y saber yr camyno derecho como he dicho, que creo que vos vais, y con esto no ay que dárseos nada por nada, y creed que este es el camyno más llano y más descansado y más seguro para todo, y atender bien a Dios y al mýo. Como vos lo habéis, y con esto no ay

que temer de nada.[636]

Como en otros casos, esta locuaz respuesta de Felipe quizá reflejaba unas profundas emociones e incertidumbre. Además, «cerrar los oýdos y aun los ojos» era precisamente lo que él mismo había hecho en el caso de Escobedo. Pero Vázquez no estaba dispuesto a tolerar esto y, en cambio, instó a Pedro de Escobedo, hijo de la víctima, a que pidiera justicia al presidente del Consejo Real.

Pocos días después, la princesa de Éboli contraatacó. Declaró que cualquiera que, «en compañía de Mateo Vázquez, trata de acusar» a Antonio Pérez de la muerte de Escobedo, «no puede dejarle de tener por enemigo».[637] Vázquez repitió sus sospechas en el caso de Escobedo en otro papel enviado al rey en noviembre de 1578, que provocó esta furibunda respuesta:

> En lo que decís en el papel que venía aquí (que he quemado) ya yo os respondí otra vez lo que avía, y lo mismo os digo agora. Y quando él que decís en el papel [Pérez] me hablare en aquello, en lo primero yo le oyré, pero no si pasare de lo que le toca, pues en las otras cosas no tiene de qué hablarme […]. Pero vos me podréis decir de palabra, y sin que él [Pérez] ni nadie lo entienda, para que yo vea si son cosas que pueden tener fundamento o no. Y de todo esto no digáis nada.[638]

Vázquez cambió entonces su estrategia. En lugar de comportarse como un ministro quejoso de un colega, al mes siguiente actuó como un sacerdote y redactó una nota, para «Vuestra Magestad solo», en la que explicaba el fracaso de tantas iniciativas políticas de su amo y lo que podría ocurrir si el rey no ponía remedio:

> Que Vuestra Magestad, procurando reduzir a su memoria cosas passadas, haga muy particular examen si ha havido algunas en que por no buen consejo, o otros motivos, pueda Vuestra Magestad temer que claman en el acatamiento de Nuestro Señor por la vengança y satisfación, para que esta, en quanto fuere possible, no falte.
>
> Que si Vuestra Magestad, con su gran christiandad y prudencia, y la experiencia que tiene, hallare que en la forma de proceder en los negocios y ocupación dellos ay algo qué advertir y qué hazer para tanto mejor se pueda acudir a todo, lo haga Vuestra Magestad.
>
> Que [Dios] alumbrará a Vuestra Magestad para elegir buenos ministros, en que

va tanto, pues sabemos que quando quiere castigar a los príncipes, comiença cegándolos en esta parte.[639]

Esta apelación al sentimiento de culpabilidad del rey demostró ser una estrategia acertada. El año 1578 había sido absolutamente aciago para Felipe, con la muerte de su heredero Fernando, su hermano don Juan y sus sobrinos Sebastián y Wenceslao. Además, la guerra en los Países Bajos era costosa y no traía victorias. Vázquez confiaba en que, tarde o temprano, la filosofía providencialista de Felipe relacionaría esta serie de desgracias con su fracaso a la hora de alcanzar «la vengança y satisfación» en el caso de Escobedo. Pero dos semanas después, un acontecimiento espectacular intensificó la parálisis del gobierno: el 10 de enero de 1579, Felipe desterró al duque de Alba de la corte. Este abandonó su aposento en el Alcázar para no regresar jamás.

La caída de la Casa de Toledo

Algunos observadores ya habían anticipado la caída de la Casa de Toledo. En 1574, Felipe constituyó una junta para que le aconsejara «como les parece que yo me tengo de aver» en razón de los «excessos en lo de la justicia, hazienda y guerra» cometidos en los Países Bajos bajo el gobierno del duque y su hijo, don Fadrique. La junta recomendó un castigo público, pero al final le faltó al rey valor: «Aunque fuera harto descanso mýo hazer esta demostración, no me parece de hazerla», confesó.[640] Sin embargo, poco antes de que Fadrique llegara a Madrid desde Flandes, un mensajero de la corte le entregó una cédula que le ordenó dirigirse directamente a sus tierras manchegas y permanecer allí por tiempo indefinido, prohibiéndole entrar en su capital. Pero el rey no había dictado su sentencia de destierro por lo acontecido en Flandes, sino por lo que sucedió en la corte ocho años antes.

En 1566, don Fadrique, entonces gentilhombre de cámara

del rey, mantenía una relación amorosa con una dama de la reina Isabel, doña Magdalena de Guzmán, a la que prometió matrimonio. De esto no hay duda porque algunas de sus cartas de amor han sobrevivido, dando a su querida «señora Magdalena» su «fe y palabra como caballero de me casar con vos si de ello soys contenta».[641] El duque de Alba tenía otras ideas: convenció al rey para que exiliara a Magdalena a un convento y desterrase a su hijo a la guarnición de Orán hasta que pudiera unirse a Alba en Bruselas. El duque también firmó un contrato que obligaba a su heredero a casarse con su prima, María de Toledo, pero Magdalena y sus familiares apelaron al rey porque Fadrique ya estaba comprometido. El rey aceptó, pero en septiembre de 1578 el duque aseguró a su incrédulo pero obediente hijo que «os ha dado Su Magestad licencia para que os caséis con la dicha señora doña María de Toledo, en razón de la cual lo podéis hazer libremente». Al mes siguiente, en presencia de un nutrido grupo de parientes, don Fadrique contrajo matrimonio con su prima y consumó la unión antes de volver al cautiverio.[642]

Aunque los Toledo trataron de mantener el asunto en secreto, la noticia pronto llegó a Madrid (posiblemente gracias a los espías al servicio de Antonio Pérez) y, según las órdenes del rey, Mateo Vázquez se enfrentó al duque y le preguntó directamente si el matrimonio había tenido lugar. Alba, según informó, «me dixo tantas cosas que decillas aquí sería muy larga scriptura. No acaba de declararse en el casamiento; pero yo sospecho que está hecho».[643] Este desafío por fin dio a Felipe una excusa perfecta para castigar a Alba y su hijo por sus «excessos en lo de la justicia, hazienda y guerra» en los Países Bajos. El 8 de diciembre, ordenó a los guardias que trasladaran a don Fadrique a la fortaleza de la Mota, en Medina del Campo, donde permaneció en total confinamiento. También le desposeyó de su puesto como gentilhombre de cámara y de los

ingresos de su encomienda.

La caída en desgracia de la Casa de Toledo ofreció a Pérez una oportunidad de oro para ajustar las cuentas pendientes. «Estando el duque de Alba en el estado de reo, y el mundo en la expectación de lo que se ha de hazer con este hombre», escribía en una consulta fechada el 2 de enero de 1579, el rey debería ordenar un castigo ejemplar: «Que no eran los príncipes más reyes de quanto mantenían justiçia y castigo». Pérez incluso exageraba el peligro: habiendo «el duque tomado una resolución tan grande y de tanto atrevimiento», preguntó, «¿a qué se podía dexar de temer que no se atreviesse, saliéndose con esto sin castigo?». Incluso estableció un odioso paralelismo con Álvaro de Luna, el favorito real caído en desgracia y decapitado en 1453, afirmando que «en todo lo que le acumularon [Luna] no huvo ninguna cosa que llegasse a este caso»; y, sin dar tregua, prosiguió: «Cuando hombres de la calidad y prendas del duque se atreven y llegan a las cosas que él, no avra ninguna que no prueven, ni nadie que no se atreva a intentar lo que quisiere; y aun las cosas que en tiempo del rey don Enrique [IV] y del rey don Juan [II]», comparaciones que buscaban refrescar la memoria a Felipe II sobre las frecuentes conspiraciones y rebeliones nobiliarias del siglo anterior.[644] Una semana más tarde, Felipe no solo desterró a Alba para el resto de su vida, sino que hizo que sus rentas de las Indias pasaran a doña Magdalena de Guzmán como «su dote y reparo de los daños rescibidos, pues ya no puede ser[le] restituida su pretensión». También desterró de la corte al prior don Antonio de Toledo, su caballerizo mayor y consejero durante treinta años. Al poco tiempo, este murió desconsolado en el oprobio.[645]

La princesa de Éboli se regocijó tanto de la caída de los enemigos declarados de la Casa de Mendoza que, seis meses más tarde, cuando el rey la hizo arrestar, conjeturó «que fue

pecado suyo, porque se había alegrado de la presa del duque de Alba». De hecho, la princesa había propiciado su propia caída, fomentando la enemistad entre los secretarios Pérez y Vázquez. Al menos en público, este se declaraba deseoso de reconciliarse con «mi señora la princesa de Éboli» y «el señor secretario Antonio Pérez», «mostrando estimar como es razón su persona y loándola mucho, que es lo mismo que yo he hecho y pienso hacer en todo tiempo y ocasión, continuando la amistad y lo que siempre he deseado serville».[646] Pero tanto Pérez como la princesa rechazaron la rama de olivo que Vázquez les tendía.

El rey no sabía qué hacer para reconciliar a sus ministros y mantener la eficacia de su gobierno («quanto más lo pienso, más confuso me hallo»), y en marzo de 1579 decidió

> tomar estos días de recogimiento para verlo bien todo y pensarlo. También en este tiempo me confesaré y comulgaré y encomendaré a Dios para que me alumbre y encamine, para que tome en pasando la Pascua la resolución que más convenga a su servicio y al descargo de mi conciencia y bien de los negocios.

Concluía: «Quizá también en estos días Dios obrará en ellos [Pérez y la princesa] para que dejen un camino tan perdido como llevan».[647]

Los deseos de Felipe fueron vanos. En cuanto regresó de sus devociones, los adversarios volvieron al ataque. Quiroga presionó a su señor con el fin de que nombrara a Pérez para el puesto todavía vacante de secretario de Italia, mientras que Vázquez continuaba quejándose al rey de que «Antonio Pérez demuestra en público [mucha] indignación contra mí, que está la corte muy escandalizada de ello». Una vez más, Felipe prometió actuar: «Yo entenderé y se procurará poner remedio y creo se pondrá el que conviene», pero el «remedio» sorprendió a la corte (y, sin duda, también a Vázquez). El rey declaró públicamente «que [Pérez] no ha matado a Escobedo», y «promete hacer castigar aquellos que lo habían calumniado»; mientras que el presidente del Consejo de Castilla amenazaba a

Pedro de Escobedo «que mirase muy bien cómo entrar en esto porque, no habiendo probado lo que pretende, sería castigado *ad penam talionis*». Con esto, notó un embajador, el asunto «se ha mucho refrescado; cosa que ha confirmado a los ánimos de los que buscaban venganza la opinión que Su Majestad estima tanto a los servicios del secretario [Pérez] como es razón, y que él prevalecerá contra sus émulos».[648] Pero el rey disimulaba.

Ante las amenazas y ultimátums de sus dos secretarios, y hallándose privado de la mayoría de sus principales asesores —unos, fallecidos; otros, caídos en desgracia—, el 30 de marzo de 1579 (víspera del primer aniversario del asesinato), Felipe dictó una carta refrendada, irónicamente, por Pérez para que el cardenal Granvela volviera de Roma a su lado. Tal vez temiendo que el cardenal no estuviese de acuerdo y diera largas al asunto, como había hecho don Juan tres años antes, Felipe añadía lastimeramente: «Yo desseo, y he menester mucho, vuestra breve venida». Luego, por si eso no fuera bastante, añadió de su puño y letra: «Quanto más presto esto fuere, tanto más holgaré dello». El embajador genovés captó de inmediato la importancia de esta invitación. Dándose cuenta de que solo dos consejeros de Estado permanecían en Madrid, «de manera que poco se negocia», predecía que Granvela, una vez llegado a España, «será omnipotente».[649]

Mientras llegaba su salvador, Felipe permaneció lejos de Madrid y de sus belicosos ministros. Pasó la Semana Santa de 1579 en San Lorenzo y, según observaron los monjes, «estábase en el oratorio de su aposento muchas horas de noche y de día, en presencia del Santo Sacramento». Estos especulaban que «allí sin duda aprendía, y Dios secretamente le inspiraba en el alma, lo que había de hacer después».[650] Pero Felipe estaba acorralado. En una audiencia en mayo, el rey le espetó al nuncio «que era abandonado por todos, y dejado solo, y que, sin embargo, era necesario que él pensase en todas las cosas». Al

mes siguiente, Vázquez se quejaba: «Me siento con tan gran dolor de cabeza que no estoy para hazer relación a Vuestra Magestad de papeles». Aunque afirmaba estar haciendo todo lo posible «para attender a cosas que es bien prevenir antes que falte del todo», se preguntaba patéticamente si el rey había pensado en alguien para hacer su trabajo después de que él muriera a causa de tal esfuerzo y tensión.[651] Cuando esta estratagema también falló, Vázquez se dejó de precauciones y pidió al rey que arrestara inmediatamente a los responsables de la muerte de Escobedo. «Presupuesto», comenzaba diciendo, «la princesa ni Antonio Pérez no parece que tienen culpa en la muerte de Escobedo», sin embargo Dios esperaba que Felipe arrestara a los «verdaderos asesinos». El rey replicó de nuevo pidiendo más tiempo para «myrar mejor qué camyno se a de tomar en allanar lo de [E]scobedo, de qué os avisaré», y repetía suavemente: «Creed que con paciencia no ay cosa que no se vence».[652]

El 9 de julio, Felipe hizo un último esfuerzo por reconciliar a sus secretarios, pero solo Vázquez accedió a «entrar en la plática de componer este negocio», y, aun así, solo a cambio de ciertas concesiones: el rey debía castigar a Pérez por difundir calumnias sin fundamento; también debía silenciar a todos los que habían «asistido y fomentado esta enemistad», y «particularmente la princesa»; y ni ella ni Pérez debían ser avisados del castigo con antelación.[653] Probablemente Vázquez había visto un nuevo billete que la princesa envió a Felipe, quejándose de las insinuaciones de Vázquez y otros:

> Como a decir que Antonio Pérez mató a Escobedo por mi respeto y que él tiene tales obligaciones en mi casa, que cuando yo se le pidiera, estuviera obligado a hacerlo. Y habiendo llegado esta gente a tal, y extendiéndose tanto su atrevimiento y desvergüenza, está Vuestra Majestad como rey y caballero, obligado a [hacer] demostración […] [contra] ese perro moro que Vuestra Majestad tiene en su servicio.[654]

Felipe no podía interponerse en la contienda entre sus

ministros hasta tener noticia de que Granvela se encontraba ya cerca, pero el 25 de julio regresó al Alcázar e hizo dos demandas a Pérez: que aceptara el puesto de embajador ante la República de Venecia, y «que los dichos Antonio Pérez y Matheo Vázquez se tratassen y fuessen amigos assý por lo que convenía a mi serviçio como a todos ellos». Pérez rechazó ambas peticiones y la princesa, de forma imprudente, dio un paso más: «Escribió un billete a su Majestad diciéndole que si no echaba a Mateo Vázquez de su servicio, ella le haría matar a los pies del rey».[655]

Evidentemente, Vázquez se enteró de esta amenaza, porque al día siguiente escribió un cruel billete para el rey, en el que comenzaba diciendo:

> No sé cómo aquella muger [la princesa] no se acuerda de la yra y justicia de Dios, y que está Vuestra Magestad para exequetalla; que no se contentando de lo passado por que podrá temer lo que sucedió a Jezebel, reyna de Israel que perseguía los prophetas y murió despedaçada y comida de perros.

Aunque este lenguaje era impropio de un sacerdote, Vázquez no había hecho más que empezar: «Antonio Pérez diz que anda haziendo falsíssimas relaciones: el demonio le deve de traer como sus hechos merescan, con que no meresce entrar en el camino de la verdad. Y pues Vuestra Magestad sabe esta, supplico a Vuestra Magestad me defienda y ampare».[656]

En esta ocasión, «habiendo confesado y comulgado» en la capilla del Alcázar de Madrid, el rey se preparó para actuar. Le contestó a Vázquez:

> En verdad, que por solos estos negocios me detengo ya aquí en qué entiendo; pero esto sea para vos solo. Y espero que se haga bien todo. Y cierto deve de aver personas estrañas […]. De [e]sa muger [la princesa] no es de espantar del que dice, sino de lo que no dice […]. Y de lo demás, yo tengo el cuydado que es razón, y como he dicho, entiendo en ello; y me detengo [en Madrid] por esto y si no, ya fuera ida o me fuera a la mañana.

Aquella noche, según un cronista, cayó en Madrid «entre las ocho y las nueve de la noche, una muy gran tempestad de piedra, la mayor que yo me acuerde haber visto jamás porque

eran las piedras comúnmente mayores que huevos de paloma». Pero el rey no hizo caso de la tormenta mientras se dedicó inmutable a leer y devolver los documentos recibidos de sus secretarios hasta altas horas de la noche. «Mucho más creo que avía que embiaros, pero no puedo agora más, que es hora de comer y dadas las doce», informó a Vázquez, antes de añadir con un sonoro suspiro de alivio: «Vendrá presto Granvela, con que creo se atajarán todas estas cosas».[657] Era la madrugada del 27 de julio de 1579. Granvela llegó a las afueras de Madrid al día siguiente.

Madrid, plaza del Cordón, noche del 28 de julio de 1579

Felipe se dispuso entonces a tender la compleja trampa que había preparado. Primero, escribió un billete para neutralizar al mayor aliado de Pérez, Antonio Mauriño de Pazos, presidente del Consejo Real y, como tal, responsable de los asuntos judiciales, pero ese día estaba enfermo, guardando cama. El billete empezaba disimuladamente: «Por vuestra indisposición y mis ocupaciones no os he escrito estos días sobre [e]stas cosas de los dos secretarios». A continuación explicaba las «muchas diligencias que se han hecho […] para entender si avía la culpa que ponían en Mateo Vázquez» por parte de Pérez y la princesa; pero, continuaba Felipe, «no se ha hallado fundamento», de modo que «me he resuelto en asegurar este negocio; y para esto no había otro remedio sino asegurar las personas, y assí he ordenado que se haga esta noche». El rey concluyó que «es justo que luego tengáis noticia de lo que pasa y por eso lo escribo agora, aunque es bien tarde», pero «yo he ordenado que os le den [este billete] en despertando» y ¡prohibió que el mensajero de Pazos saliera del Alcázar hasta la mañana siguiente![658]

No obstante, la trampa de Felipe necesitaba cómplices, y en

cierto momento de la noche del 28 de julio ordenó a dos ministros de confianza que estuvieran listos para una misión secreta: Álvaro García de Toledo, un alcalde de casa y corte, debía tener dispuestos a veinte alguaciles y un caballo de repuesto, mientras don Rodrigo Manuel, capitán de la Guarda Española, debía reunir a sus hombres y conseguir un carruaje. A continuación Felipe terminó de trabajar en sus papeles y, como de costumbre, sus ayudas de cámara se los distribuyeron a sus secretarios. En el billete adjunto a las consultas enviadas por Pérez, escribió: «Los papeles de Italia os vuelvo, y en ellos lo que se ha de hacer; y con los de Portugal me quedo, porque no los he visto. Vuestro particular quedará despachado antes que me parta, a lo menos lo que es de mi parte». Si Pérez se estuvo preguntando por el significado de esta última y críptica frase, no fue durante mucho tiempo, porque sobre la medianoche, mientras los alguaciles cercaban la Casa del Cordón, García de Toledo llamó a la puerta. Pérez se había retirado a dormir, y cuando entendió «que era preso, tambaleó y no había fuerzas de vestirse. El alcalde casi le hizo vestirse de sus criados». Entonces, montado en el caballo de repuesto, sin su espada pero «con muchos alguaciles», García de Toledo le llevó escoltado.[659]

A continuación, se desencadenó un segundo drama. Felipe convocó al almirante de Castilla y, después de que había cenado, «que podía estar cerca a la media noche, le llamó para darle órdenes» de acompañar a don Rodrigo Manuel y sus guardias a arrestar a la princesa de Éboli. El rey había elegido a un destacado miembro de la Casa de Mendoza (la hermana del almirante estaba casada con el duque del Infantado), sin duda para asegurarse de que doña Ana hiciera lo que se le ordenaba. Acompañada solo de tres damas, la princesa entró en el carruaje real que le esperaba y, con una escolta, fue llevada hasta la fortaleza de Pinto.[660] Por segunda vez en seis meses, el rey había arrestado y exiliado a un grande de Castilla.

Una vez cumplido el objetivo que le había traído a Madrid, Felipe regresó a El Escorial y llevó consigo a Mateo Vázquez. Allí les aguardaba Granvela. Entre tanto, el resto de los ministros, el cuerpo diplomático y la población de su capital reflexionaban sobre la trascendencia de los grandes hechos acontecidos. En palabras de un embajador, «este caso ha dado no poco de maravillar, viendo en cuán poco tiempo aquellos que comandaban al mundo ahora se hallan en su miserable fortuna».[661] De esta manera, dieciséis meses después de su asesinato, Escobedo había conseguido un cierto grado de venganza. Felipe, por su parte, había logrado acabar con la parálisis de su gobierno y ocultar su consentimiento en el asesinato del desafortunado secretario de su hermano. Por el momento.

15. Años de triunfo, 1578-1585

Felipe II y la batalla de Alcazarquivir

El 13 de agosto de 1578, Felipe II se quejó malhumorado a Antonio Pérez: «He dormydo de manera esta noche que agora que es antes de comer me estoy cayendo de sueño; y así creo que se vee en las razones y en la letra deste papel, que cierto algunas palabras he escrito durmiendo». ¿Qué había mantenido despierto al rey? Se encontraba en El Escorial para las fiestas patronales de San Lorenzo cuando Pérez, en Madrid, recibió la dramática noticia de que fuerzas marroquíes habían derrotado y dado muerte al rey Sebastián de Portugal en la batalla de Alcazarquivir. Al enterarse de la noticia, a última hora del día 12 de agosto, Felipe «retirose luego a su oratorio» y, a continuación, se acostó. Pero, como le decía a Pérez, no pudo dormir.[662]

El desastre no fue del todo una sorpresa. Felipe había celebrado la Navidad de 1576 con su sobrino en el monasterio de Guadalupe, donde conversaron sobre el plan de Sebastián para conquistar Marruecos. Felipe había prometido proporcionarle cincuenta galeras y hasta cinco mil soldados para esa expedición. Aunque ninguno de los monarcas consiguió movilizar sus recursos en 1577, al parecer Felipe no informó a su sobrino de que, entre tanto, había mandado a su agente secreto Giovanni Margliani —conocido por su nombre españolizado, Juan Marliano— con plenos poderes para firmar un alto el fuego con el Turco *(véase capítulo 13)*. En febrero de 1578, Marliano acordó una «suspensión de armas» para el resto del año que incluía tanto a los imperios español y otomano como a sus aliados —entre ellos, los soberanos de Marruecos—, e informó al rey de que si enviaba unos regalos adecuados junto con una embajada formal, el sultán estaría dispuesto a firmar

una tregua de hasta veinte años.

Cuando estas espectaculares noticias llegaron a Madrid, el rey afirmó ver la mano de Dios en el éxito de Marliano. Dado «lo que convendría atender a lo de Flandes», escribió:

> Importa mucho concluir esta tregua y tanto que, sin ella, no sé cómo se podría ir adelante […]. Y así me resuelbo en que se lleve el negocio adelante y se procure de concluyr con la más ventaja que se pueda, y breuedad, para que nos podamos asegurar desde luego della, y de que no vendrá armada el año que viene [1579].

El rey expresó su preferencia por una tregua que durara veinte años —el máximo periodo mencionado por Marliano— y que vinculase no solo a los dos monarcas, sino también a sus sucesores y a sus aliados.[663]

Felipe también escribió una carta ológrafa a su sobrino en la que, pese a alabar su glorioso plan de «propagar la religión cristiana en países de infieles», le recordaba «que esta era una empresa sumamente difícil», y por eso «le rogaba a pensarle muy bien antes que se moviere». Sobre todo, dado que Sebastián carecía de heredero, Felipe le instaba a no participar en persona. También ordenó a don Juan de Silva, su embajador en Lisboa, que informara a Sebastián de la suspensión de armas con el sultán y le indicase que un ataque pondría en riesgo la tregua. Felipe esperaba que Silva pudiera sacar a su sobrino «del engaño en la que está y del peligro en que quiere poner su persona, y estado, y reputación». Era demasiado tarde: Sebastián partió de Lisboa con una flota en la que iba la mayoría de los nobles de Portugal y unos 17.000 soldados. Silva, que acompañaba la expedición, se quejaba a su señor de «que somos pocos, bisoños, desobedientes, mal gobernados, sin cabeza superior sino el rey [Sebastián] […], que no tiene ministro que le contradiga ni tenga autoridad para ello». Añadió: «Pésame de no poder escrebir a Vuestra Magestad alguna esperanza que no se funda en milagro». No hubo milagro. El 4 de agosto de 1578, en Alcazarquivir, según las

amargas palabras de Silva, «conforme a la razón, sucedió el miserable caso de la rota y pérdida del rey».[664]

Desde luego, a Felipe le preocupaba un contraataque musulmán. El 13 de agosto, pese a su noche de insomnio, envió al secretario de Guerra, Juan Delgado, una lista de «algunas provisiones», señalando orgulloso que «buena parte dellas añadí yo, y son así para asegurar» tanto la costa andaluza «como las plaças de África de Portugal».[665] Pero ¿qué significaba la «rota y pérdida del rey» Sebastián para los Países Bajos? Antonio Pérez trataba de cotejar «lo de acá con lo de allá», concluyendo que «aunque aya mucho dinero», España ahora no podía «acabarse de conquistar» los Países Bajos. Dada la situación inestable en el Mediterráneo, recomendó un nuevo convenio con los rebeldes flamencos. Felipe estuvo de acuerdo: «No ay duda sino que lo mejor sería de acomodarnos, quedando salvo lo de la religión, pero aun en esto tiene cien mil dificultades, porque estando [los rebeldes] tan superiores, no han de querer venir en cosa por que se pueda pasar». Enfrentado a tantas incertidumbres, Felipe partió abruptamente de El Escorial, «sin ver la casa ni la obra, saliendo por una puerta falsa de los jardines, casi solo» para consultar con sus ministros en Madrid.[666]

La muerte de su sobrino también creaba graves problemas dinásticos. El sucesor evidente de Sebastián era su tío abuelo, el cardenal Enrique, de sesenta y siete años de edad; y, dado que ni Enrique ni sus hermanos (todos muertos) tenían hijos legítimos, Felipe era su pariente varón legítimo más cercano. En su primer billete tras conocer los sucesos de Alcazarquivir, Pérez se alegraba de esta propicia circunstancia: «No puede dexarse de sentir, pero quando bien sea verdad, buenas cosas trae consigo», le escribió a su amo, evaluando a continuación sin ningún reparo los derechos de cada pretendiente al trono. Sin embargo, Felipe impuso precaución porque «parece más

dificultoso el negocio».[667] Sebastián había dejado un Consejo de Regencia para que gobernara Portugal en su ausencia y, el 23 de agosto de 1578, sus miembros acordaron que el cardenal Enrique debía servir como «gobernador y defensor» del reino hasta que se tuviera seguridad sobre el destino de Sebastián. Cinco días después proclamaron rey a Enrique, aunque sin mucho entusiasmo, dado que en Portugal «ahora no se tratan sino de llorar sus hijos y parientes y el rescate que les ha de costar, que será otra segunda perdición deste reino». El gobernador de Fez exigió por su parte tres millones de ducados por el rescate de sus seis mil cautivos, en tanto que otros vencedores marroquíes, con más de ocho mil prisioneros en su poder, esperaban obtener una compensación igualmente generosa.[668]

La proclamación de Enrique dio tiempo a Felipe a reivindicar sus derechos como «heredero presuntivo» tanto en Portugal como en el extranjero; y, al mismo tiempo, a prepararse para la lucha en caso de fracasar. Inició la movilización casi por casualidad. El 25 de agosto, Felipe encargó al duque de Alba y al marqués de Santa Cruz, sus principales comandantes militares y navales, que diseñaran un plan para capturar Alarache (Larache) a fin de desbaratar cualquier contraataque musulmán. Los dos expertos respondieron con un plan ambicioso que implicaba la movilización de casi todos los recursos de la monarquía en el Mediterráneo, a lo que Felipe respondió:

> Para esto se me ofrecen dos dificultades grandes, y aún son tres. La una que cómo se podrá desamparar tanto lo de Nápoles y Sicilia no estando ciertos de que no vendrá la Armada del Turco […]. La segunda dificultad, que como se hará con Portugal [si se tomara Alarache], siendo aquello su conquista. La tercera que costará mucho aquello […] aviéndose de acudir a lo de acá y a lo de Flandes como no se puede dexar de hazer.

No obstante, pocos días después, el rey se dio cuenta de que las fuerzas movilizadas contra un enemigo podían, en caso de

necesidad, utilizarse contra otro:

> Me parece que es bien que se hagan todas estas prevenciones, buscando forma para ello, porque es bien tenerlos prevenidas para todo lo que se puede ofrescer así de la armada del Turco, que aquí decís, como también por si en Francia rompiesen no nos hallen desapercibidos, y si no para esto de Alarache, de que no ay duda sino que conviene mucho y es de mucha importancia.

Felipe ordenó a Juan Delgado que convocara una junta de expertos para planificar una fuerza anfibia capaz de conseguir varios objetivos, incluida la invasión de Portugal, pero «con mucho secreto» para que nadie entendiera «el mysterio del negocio».[669]

En aquel momento, el propio Felipe no entendía todas las partes del «mysterio». Por un lado, todavía no sabía si en Estambul Marliano había conseguido prolongar la tregua con el sultán, protegiendo así sus posesiones mediterráneas de un ataque otomano. Por otro lado, en palabras de don Cristóbal de Moura (el embajador de Felipe en Lisboa), Enrique estaba «viejo y quebrantado» y por tanto «puédese morir el rey muy brevemente», obligando a Felipe a hacer valer su derecho al trono de Portugal a muy corto plazo. Dado que los numerosos preparativos militares y navales necesarios para la invasión no podían ocultarse, la afirmación de que pretendía o bien atacar Alarache o defender el Mediterráneo occidental permitió a Felipe asegurar (cuando el papa Gregorio XIII cuestionó sus intenciones) «que no ha de mover armas contra Portugal». Y en caso de que la salud de Enrique mejorara, Felipe podía de hecho atacar Alarache.[670]

Una década después, Felipe también cambió sus planes varias veces mientras preparaba la Empresa de Inglaterra, y en ambas ocasiones lo hizo con la creencia (como aseguró a Delgado en 1579) de que «Dios lo puede hazer todo, y así lo pongo en sus manos». En ambos casos, fuera o no la intención de Felipe dar la impresión de tener un pensamiento

imprevisible, la consiguiente confusión produjo una ventaja importante: hasta casi el momento de lanzar la invasión, nadie pudo estar seguro de cómo iba a desplegar las fuerzas navales y terrestres que había reunido. Como comentó un embajador italiano ya en enero de 1580: «Se dice todavía que Su Majestad pasará hacía Portugal, pero no veo preparaciones que me permiten creerlo […]. En fin, esta es una máscara compuesta de diversas cosas que no se puede conjeturar con confianza alguna en que forma habría de lograr».[671] ¡Cómo habría disfrutado el rey leyendo esas palabras!

Muchos ministros de Felipe sentían un gran entusiasmo por la unión de las coronas de Castilla y Portugal. El *Diálogo llamado Philippino*, un tratado para desacreditar a otros aspirantes al trono portugués, explicaba que Felipe tenía la misión de unir la península ibérica porque ello promovería la unión del pueblo de Dios como preludio a la recuperación de Jerusalén por parte de la cristiandad. En Lisboa, Moura veía Alcazarquivir como un regalo divino para su amo: «Confío en la misericordia de Dios que alumbrara a Vuestra Magestad de manera que sepa escoger el camino que más conviene a su servicio y bien destas coronas, porque tan extraño acaescimiento como por esta tierra ha venido, no lo permita la Divina Providencia sin gran causa».[672] Quizás estos análisis mesiánicos atrajeran a Felipe, pero no consiguieron impresionar a la élite portuguesa cuando se reunió para comparar las candidaturas de los cinco descendientes vivos del rey Manuel de Portugal. Felipe, hijo de la emperatriz Isabel, la mayor de las hijas, tenía claramente más derecho que el duque de Saboya, hijo de la hermana menor de Isabel. Sin embargo, ¿cómo resultaba la comparación con Catalina, hija del menor de los hijos de Manuel, casada con uno de los principales nobles de Portugal, el duque de Braganza, descendiente a su vez de la hermana del rey Manuel? Catalina sostenía que la hija de un

hijo menor (es decir, ella) tenía preferencia sobre el hijo de una hija mayor (Felipe). ¿Y cómo se debería evaluar a don Antonio, prior de Crato, hijo de otro hijo menor del rey Manuel, una figura carismática y uno de los más ricos vasallos del reino? Los derechos de don Antonio adolecían de dos defectos: había sido hecho prisionero en Alcazarquivir y era ilegítimo. La primera desventaja se resolvió pronto: don Antonio huyó de Marruecos y, tras viajar de incógnito por el sur de España, volvió a entrar en Portugal, donde recibió una calurosa acogida popular. La segunda desventaja representaba un obstáculo mucho mayor, sobre todo después de que Enrique, como legado apostólico, emitiera una declaración formal de ilegitimidad contra su sobrino y le desterrase de su corte.

Los derechos de Felipe también tenían problemas. El más serio, como escribía Moura, era el «envejecido odio» de Portugal con Castilla, que, «por muchos que se ablanden, siempre ha de haber quien se tenga». Así pues, advirtió a Felipe, «lo que Vuestra Majestad debe tener a punto para lo que sucediere es el ejército que tengo dicho y sesenta galeras, y el día que este rey cerrare los ojos, por mar y por tierra se ha de caminar por esta ciudad [de Lisboa]. Crea Vuestra Majestad que estas prevenciones han de ser las mejores unturas que podemos aplicar a esta dureza». Felipe hizo caso. Además de ir sumando opiniones favorables a su candidatura por parte de teólogos cuidadosamente seleccionados, como explicó a Moura,

> cuanto a lo que me escribís a propósito de lo que conviene estar prevenido, ya se os ha escripto cómo se va tratando con secreto y disimulación de las prevenciones necesarias para en cualquier caso. Y creed de cierto que, aunque yo deseo que no sea menester nada desto, sino que todo se hiciese por bien, por mi parte no hay descuido en ninguna cosa.

Y concluía: «Tanto más convendría apretar por una parte las negociaciones y por otra no quitar el miedo de las armas». [673]

Felipe llegó a utilizar esta mezcla de negociaciones y miedo

para persuadir al rey Enrique de que le reconociera como heredero antes de morir. Tras justificar su derecho con todo detalle, le recordaba amenazadoramente a su tío «que lo que entre particulares es pleito, entre príncipes suele ser guerra, derramamiento de sangre, miseria y ruinas de reinos».[674] Pero Enrique se negó. En su lugar creó una junta de cinco gobernadores para que regentaran Portugal en caso de que él muriese antes de que los jueces de su reino hubieran llegado a una decisión sobre la sucesión. Por su parte, Felipe mantuvo a su secretario de Guerra constantemente a su lado: «Porque me podría ser que huviese más brevedad en la muerte del rey, con que creo que se ha de rebolver lo de aquel reyno, me parece que importa mucho la brevedad de todo y tenerlo tan a punto que no aya qué hazer, en queriéndose, sino començar el negocio».[675] Era una previsión profética, porque, al día siguiente, el último rey de la Casa de Avis murió, y los cinco gobernadores a los que este había nombrado comenzaron a dirigir Portugal y su imperio hasta que surgiera un claro sucesor.

La conquista de Portugal

Felipe recibió la noticia de la muerte el 4 de febrero de 1580 y, según el embajador veneciano, se retiró varios días, «de modo que no trata con nadie salvo por vía de billetes», mientras decidía qué hacer a continuación. «Si no es asentándose lo de Portugal, no se puede atender a otra cosa», advertía Felipe a su embajador en Roma, y diez días después, se quitó la máscara y firmó órdenes de concentrar tropas en Extremadura y galeras en Cádiz.[676] Pero ¿quién comandaría la expedición? El rey nombró a Santa Cruz para liderar la flota, y, en un principio, pensaba asumir el mando de su ejército personalmente, como había hecho en los Países Bajos dos décadas antes. Según Moura, «tengo por cierto que su real persona y presencia conquistará más que dos ejércitos juntos», y el embajador

veneciano estaba de acuerdo: «Sin su presencia no se puede hacer cosa buena en la empresa que pretende», mientras que «su persona en el campo […] bastará para que la siguiera toda la nobleza de estos reinos». No obstante, continuaba el embajador perspicazmente,

> otros dicen el contrario, poniendo en consideración que el rey está ahora de edad madura, haviendo respeto a su complexión, y a la breve vida que solían haber todos los príncipes y especialmente estos de la casa de Austria, se teme que cualquiera mutación le pueda hacer daño […], el cual no sería sin peligro de su vida, con la cual no solo se perdería Portugal, pero también se pondría en duda todo el Reino.

Una semana más tarde, el presidente del Consejo Real suplicaba a Felipe que no condujera el ejército en persona ni arriesgase «la seguridad de la real persona de Vuestra Magestad y lo que de su vida y salud depende, que es el ser de todos sus reinos y estados, y el universal de la religión católica». En su lugar, «paresce al Consejo que ninguna persona de la que hoy conoscemos es más conveniente y a propósito que la del duque d[e] Alba». El presidente reconocía el «justo desdeño que Vuestra Magestad tiene del duque», pero le pedía que se sobrepusiera a él.[677]

El rey no recibió con agrado esta recomendación, pero otros ministros la repitieron. Al día siguiente, recibió un billete de Delgado que empezaba diciendo: «Yo con pedir perdón a Vuestra Magestad de lo que me atrevo a decir aquí», y continuaba: «Me parece que lo que aquí hace más al caso es la reputación». Por tanto, urgía a Felipe para que nombrase a Alba y que este se hiciera cargo del ejército porque él «será el mayor espanto a Portugal». Y, concluía con astucia, «si Vuestra Magestad no fuere servido de escribille, pareciéndole que yo vaya por la posta y le dé cuenta de la voluntad de Vuestra Magestad y razón de estado en que todo está, y que parte en coche o litera sin venir aquí, lo haré».[678] ¡Qué bien conocía Delgado a su amo! Tras haber «pensado harto sobre lo que allí

dice, y de una parte y otra hay bien que mirar en ello», Felipe venció en cierta manera su «desdeño» y aceptó la oferta de Delgado: fue por tanto el secretario, no el rey, quien el 22 de febrero ordenó a Alba que abandonara su lugar de exilio y partiese hacia Extremadura para organizar un ejército. El rey rehusó incluso ver al duque o permitirle ir a Madrid; en su lugar, Delgado se reunió con Alba por el camino, le informó sobre su tarea y le mostró los mapas que el gobierno tenía de Portugal. Como Alba comentó irónicamente, «el rey [me] enviava a conquistar reinos, arrastrando las cadenas y los cepos».[679]

Granvela —entonces el ministro en quien más confiaba Felipe— insistió en que su amo no debía repetir el error que cometió durante la situación de emergencia en los Países Bajos en la década de 1560 y quedarse en su capital *(véase capítulo 8)*, sino que debía dirigirse primero a Extremadura y luego, cuando pudiese, a Lisboa. Felipe redactó cumplidamente un nuevo testamento, y en marzo de 1580 salió de Madrid hacia Badajoz, a solo cinco kilómetros de la frontera portuguesa, seguido por su esposa, sus tres hijos mayores y un puñado de consejeros (deliberadamente, dejó a la mayoría de sus cortesanos y ministros para evitar dar la impresión de que los castellanos gobernarían Portugal). En mayo, Felipe se trasladó a Mérida, donde finalmente venció su «desdeño» y se reunió con Alba. Los dos hombres pasaron tres días encerrados, ultimando la estrategia, y después el duque se reunió con la familia real para pasar revista a un impresionante ejército. Por el momento, Felipe actuaba como comandante en jefe, comunicando cada noche la contraseña y organizando la disposición de sus tropas, mientras que Alba actuaba como mero lugarteniente suyo. Absolutamente intimidada, la Junta de Gobierno portuguesa reconoció a Felipe como su soberano, tanto por derecho como por la Divina Providencia; sin embargo, el 19 de junio los

partidarios de don Antonio le proclamaron rey, y el nuevo «soberano» entró en Lisboa, tomó posesión del palacio real y llamó a todos los portugueses a la obediencia.

Esto tuvo dos consecuencias inmediatas: los duques de Braganza reconocieron a Felipe como su rey legítimo; y Alba cruzó la frontera y libró «la mayor jornada militar emprendida durante toda la época de los Austrias».[680] Su triunfo se debió no solo a los meses de cuidadosa planificación, sino también a la cercanía del rey y a la ausencia (gracias al eclipse de Pérez y sus aliados) de rivales en la corte. El duque enviaba al rey informes de sus avances, en ocasiones hasta dos y tres veces al día, comunicándole cualquier cosa que echaba en falta, y el rey se aseguraba de que lo recibiese (de hecho, sus proveedores acabaron la campaña con un excedente considerable). El duque arribó a Setúbal, en la costa atlántica, en poco más de dos semanas, donde se juntaron Santa Cruz y su Armada, que acababan de salir de Cádiz. Enseguida, los dos comandantes acometieron una operación de asombrosa audacia: las galeras de Santa Cruz zarparon con Alba, 15.500 soldados, 170 caballos y 13 cañones hasta que desembarcaron, tres días después, en la orilla norte del Tajo, cerca de Cascais. Cuando esta ciudad se negó a rendirse, las tropas de Alba la tomaron por asalto y la saquearon.

Este acto de brutalidad enfadó a Felipe. En una carta ológrafa, mandó al duque «que lo ordenéis que no haya saco en Lisboa, ni le pueda haber», porque «nunca jamás en la vida de los hombres se acabará la grita de ello».[681] Esto era exactamente lo que don Antonio esperaba, y por eso trató de forzar a Alba a tomar al asalto la capital. Pero Alba optó por un movimiento indirecto y flanqueó a sus adversarios antes de atacarles, mientras Santa Cruz tomaba posesión de toda la marina portuguesa anclada en el Tajo. Aunque las tropas de Alba saquearon los alrededores de la capital lusa durante tres días, el

duque aceptó un rescate de 600.000 escudos de parte de la ciudad para evitar el expolio.

Alba informó entonces orgulloso a su señor de que «aquí, señor, ya no hay que pensar en guerra».

> Hoy se está en este reino tan sin poder imaginar que sea menester dispararse un arcabuz en todo él para tener Vuestra Magestad posesión dél y obediencia entera, y que esto se haya hecho en dos días menos de dos meses: que a 27 de junio salió ejército de Vuestra Magestad de Cantillana, y a 25 de agosto a mediodía era todo de Vuestra Magestad.[682]

Como era habitual, el duque exageraba. Don Antonio escapó y organizó la resistencia contra Felipe, primero desde Coímbra y después desde Oporto; y aunque los vencedores saquearon esta ciudad en octubre, don Antonio consiguió escapar de nuevo. Alba lo consideró algo insignificante, pero otros, entre ellos el rey, establecieron un paralelismo con lo que ocurrió en los Países Bajos en 1567: «No sé si se dijo lo mismo del de Orange», reflexionó Felipe, «y así no hay que fiar hasta tenerlo [a don Antonio] muerto o preso».[683] También se iba mirando cómo tomar el control sobre las ocho islas Azores que habían reconocido a don Antonio como su soberano.

En mitad de ese verano victorioso, aconteció una notable desgracia: la reina Ana y muchos ministros que acompañaban al rey en Extremadura murieron durante una epidemia de catarro, e incluso Felipe enfermó gravemente. Aunque en diciembre de 1580 montó en su caballo para entrar en su nuevo reino vestido «de herreruelo» (es decir, con la armadura completa), «manifestavan en el color de su rostro lo que la soledad y enfermedad le causavan», y tuvo que continuar el resto de la jornada en su carruaje.[684] Por fin, el 16 de abril de 1581, Felipe se presentó ante las Cortes portuguesas en Tomar, donde fue aclamado como rey y recibió el juramento de lealtad de sus nuevos súbditos.

Felipe I de Portugal

Fue sin duda el momento triunfal de su vida. Según Mateo Vázquez, testigo presencial del evento, Felipe apareció para su coronación «vestido de brocado, con su cetro en la mano, que parescía muy bien […]. Don Diego de Córdoba dezía que al rey David», pero a Felipe no le gustó la ceremonia [véase lámina 37]. «Ya habréis sabido cómo me quieren hacer vestir de brocado muy contra mi voluntad», escribió a sus hijas («contra mi voluntad», porque seguía llevando luto por su esposa), pero desde luego el nuevo rey se esforzaba por ganarse el afecto de los portugueses.[685] Ya había suprimido los «puertos secos» en Castilla, donde se cobraban impuestos sobre los bienes que cruzaran la frontera, y ahora convenció a las Cortes de Tomar de que los suprimieran en el lado portugués. También manifestó su respeto para la independencia de Portugal en asuntos de protocolo. En la frontera, hizo que todos los funcionarios castellanos que viajaban con él dejaran sus insignias de mando y, en 1581, tras aprobar una cédula que solicitaba ayuda para un embajador que iba a viajar de Lisboa a Barcelona, el rey tachó su firma y explicó: «No está bien esta cédula que dice "de aquí a Madrid y de allí a Barcelona", y no a de decir sino "desde la raya entre estos reynos de Portugal y los de Castilla hasta Madrid, y desde allí hasta la raya entre aquellos reynos de Castilla y los de Aragón". Y assí se haga». El rey también se aseguró de que sus ministros manejaran los asuntos referentes a Portugal en portugués e hizo todo lo que pudo por dominar él mismo esta lengua, aunque según un cortesano castellano (que se sentía «como si estuviéssemos en Turquía»), los nuevos súbditos del rey «le han hecho aprender la lengua más por fuerça que por grado, con sus grandes importunidades».[686]

Aunque el nuevo rey de Portugal se esforzó por mantener el *statu quo* en los asuntos internos, no perdió tiempo para aprovechar la ventaja ofrecida por la unión de las coronas e

inclinar el equilibrio de poder internacional a su favor. En 1580 había autorizado a Marliano, todavía en Estambul, a renovar la suspensión de armas con el sultán. Entonces, en febrero de 1581, a pesar de los esfuerzos de los agentes franceses e ingleses por sabotearla, Marliano firmó una prórroga de la tregua de tres años. La noticia de este acuerdo indignó a Gregorio XIII, que amenazó «en pena de haver hecha la suspensión» con poner fin a los impuestos reales a la Iglesia española («las tres gracias»; *véase capítulo 11*), concedidos explícitamente para financiar una flota de galeras que hiciese retroceder a las fuerzas del Islam. Felipe respondió con la misma combinación de quejas, halagos, chantaje y amenazas que había utilizado con anteriores pontífices. ¿No se daba cuenta Gregorio de que la suspensión era meramente «un descansar para bolver con mejor aliento a la guerra»? ¿Por qué el rey francés, «que tiene paz perpetua con el turco», recibe gracias similares de los papas

> para que hiziessen un poco de guerra a los herejes, que al cabo se viene a rematar en conciertos perjudiciales a la misma Sede Apostólica, y detenérmelas a mí, que no solo aventuro mis estados patrimoniales de los Payses Baxos por conservar y mantener nuestra santa fee cathólica romana en ellos, sino que gasto y consumo tanta parte del aver de los otros que Dios me ha encomendado en prosecución desta causa?

En resumen, «¿qué causa ay para que aya de ser yo medido con medida desigual que los otros?». Tras las quejas, venían las amenazas: «Pues yo no puedo durar tanto tiempo sin ayuda, ni reduzir a mis rebeldes que no menos lo son también de la Sede Apostólica y de Dios a su obediencia y a la mía, negarme esta ayuda [las gracias] y quitar los medios necessarios para ella es impossibilitarme». Dos semanas más tarde, el rey emitió la amenaza de concluir una tregua con sus rebeldes protestantes también. Si se le negaban las gracias, «que son los medios con que se puede acudir en parte a tantas [cosas] como conviene acudirse», el papa «devría mirar que todo esto me podria forçar a lo que yo no querría en ninguna manera del mundo. Mas si

falta a esto Su Santidad, que tanta obligación tiene a ello, quedaré muy descargado con Dios y con el mundo de qualquiera cosa que se hiziere por esto».[687] Una vez más, Felipe se impuso. Gregorio renovó las tres gracias.

Felipe ahora quedaba libre para atender a las Azores, donde solo la isla más grande, São Miguel, aceptó su autoridad. Don Antonio, una vez huido de la península, se dispuso a recabar ayuda extranjera para consolidar su posición en el archipiélago, que de este modo serviría de trampolín para su reconquista de Portugal. Después de prometer a Isabel de Inglaterra un fuerte en África occidental a cambio de su apoyo, once barcos ingleses se unieron a su expedición. Pero la mayor parte de la fuerza expedicionaria de don Antonio en 1582 procedía de Francia, reclutada y comandada por Filippo Strozzi, quien una década antes había conducido un contingente naval francés a Holanda *(véase capítulo 11)*. Para derrotar a los rebeldes y a sus aliados, fue necesario organizar una operación intrínsecamente novedosa: un ataque anfibio. Aunque las fuerzas combinadas de Felipe habían tomado Túnez en 1573 y Lisboa en 1580, las Azores presentaban un obstáculo muy distinto porque quedaban a 1.800 kilómetros al oeste de Portugal. Nadie había vencido a un enemigo atrincherado en el océano.

El marqués de Santa Cruz poseía una amplia experiencia en operaciones combinadas, y reunió eficazmente hombres, municiones y barcos para la nueva empresa; sin embargo, para cuando zarpó de Lisboa, Strozzi había conquistado ya la mayor parte de São Miguel. Esto dejaba al marqués sin más alternativa que una acción naval. El 26 de julio de 1582, día de Santa Ana, entabló combate con la flota de Strozzi en la primera batalla conocida entre barcos de guerra a vela. Según don Lope de Figueroa, un veterano de Lepanto, se luchó «con la mayor furia que se ha visto», y al final Strozzi perdió diez barcos y más de mil hombres.[688] Sin embargo, Santa Cruz solo recuperó São

Miguel. Don Antonio volvió a escaparse una vez más y el resto del archipiélago mantuvo su actitud desafiante. Sería necesaria otra operación anfibia al año siguiente, coordinada por el rey y sus asesores en Lisboa.

Pérez y la princesa, amordazados

Cuando Felipe salió de Madrid en 1580, dejó a Granvela actuando *de facto* (aunque no *de iure*) como gobernador de España, igual que había hecho Tavera durante las ausencias de Carlos V *(véase capítulo 1)*, y tanto el cardenal como los presidentes y secretarios de cada consejo continuaban enviando sus consultas al rey y recibiendo su rescripto sobre cada una. Muchas eran tocantes a Antonio Pérez y la princesa de Éboli, ambos todavía bajo arresto.

En agosto de 1579, tras un mes de confinamiento en la casa del alcalde García de Toledo, el antiguo secretario se sentía «aflixadíssimo de manera que su huésped teme el seso o la vida; nada gallardo como lo andaba en salud y pujanza, desseoso de ser amigo de todo el mundo y desengañado de cómo ha andado». Un observador malévolo sugirió que Pérez estaba tan desesperado por ser rehabilitado «que si Su Magestad se lo mandaba serviría de lacayo al señor secretario Mateo Vázquez». Estos informes indujeron al rey a permitir que Pérez regresara a su propia casa, donde tomó juramento «de que por él, ni por sus deudos ni valedores, no le sería hecho daño alguno a Mateo Vázquez».[689] Sin embargo, Pérez permaneció bajo arresto domiciliario y, en diciembre de 1580, Antonio Mauriño de Pazos —aliado de Pérez y presidente del Consejo Real— informaba al rey de que «[el] encerramiento e no hacer ejercicio como solía» habían hecho que el exsecretario estuviese «con mil melanchonias y indisposiciones de mala digestión, y que dellas temen los médicos ruines efectos». El rey contestó desconfiado: «Informaos bien desto de Antonio Pérez, y de su humildad y

modestia; y si fuere necesario el hacer egercicio para su salud, podrá estar en su huerta, como está en la casa, sin entrar en el lugar, ni en otra parte, sino por allí por el campo, y cerca de su huerta, para egercicio». Cuatro meses después, Pazos volvió a intentarlo e indicó que Pérez solo «desea lo que todos los detenidos, que es la libertad», y suplicó que el rey «sea servido usar con él de la misericordia que con todos Su Magestad usa». Felipe todavía no mostraba compasión: «Paréceme que he entreoído algo de que todavía hay mensages entre [Pérez] y la princesa d[e] Éboli, que ni al uno ni al otro les está bien». Ordenó «que con secreto y disimulación procuraréis saber lo que hay en ello; y siendo así, de atajarlo».[690]

Las indagaciones revelaron escasa «humildad y modestia». En su lugar, llovieron informes de Madrid según los cuales «en casa de Antonio Pérez había mucho exceso de juegos, que llegaban a millares de ducados» y que «tenía un aposento en el Corral do se representaban las comedias, aderezado de paños de seda y sillas; y daba 30 reales por el dicho aposento cada día». Un rumor en particular enfurecía al rey. «Se dice que ha salido ahí Antonio Pérez con diez y seis pages, y algunos con espadas, y otras personas que van cerca dél como que le guardan», se quejaba Felipe a Pazos, y terminaba enojado: «Más le conviene a Antonio Pérez estar encerrado para su seguridad»; era una clara amenaza. Pazos respondió señalando la patente anomalía que presentaba la situación jurídica. «Si Antonio Pérez ha deservido a Vuestra Magestad tan gravemente que merece se le corte la cabeza, jueces hay que lo podrán y sabrán hacer»; pero el rey respondió enigmáticamente que «si el negocio fuera de calidad que sufriera procederse en él por juicio público, desde el primer día se hubiere hecho».[691]

Parece que Pazos todavía no comprendía que el rey no podía permitir de ninguna manera un juicio público tanto contra Pérez como contra la princesa, porque quedaría al

descubierto su propio papel en el asesinato de Escobedo; tampoco se daba cuenta de que Felipe ya había emprendido un camino alternativo. Cuando todavía se encontraba en Madrid, en una carta secreta «de mi mano», el rey informó a un obispo de su máxima confianza que «con todo secreto y recato recibáis información» si sus secretarios en la Corona de Castilla «han hecho sus oficios como deben». Cuando falleció el obispo, Felipe escribió —en junio de 1581— otra carta secreta «de mi mano» encargando la tarea a Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, miembro de la Suprema y del Consejo Real, que le había acompañado a Portugal, y Tomás de Salazar, también miembro de la Suprema y que había permanecido en Madrid. Esta vez, Pérez se había convertido en el único blanco, y Felipe proporcionó una lista de «testigos señalados» que los dos visitadores deberían interrogar en secreto.[692]

El embajador toscano, Luigi Dovara, fue el primero en prestar declaración. El 30 de mayo de 1582, en Lisboa, juró que cuatro años antes, para hacerse «con Antonio Pérez alguna amistad, le dio 4.000 ducados […] en nombre del Gran Duque». Luego, «preguntado qué otras cosas sabe [y] ha oído de dicho Antonio Pérez», Dovara nombró a muchos «otros pretendientes italianos que le donaban por esta forma al dicho Antonio Pérez» y las dádivas que cada uno de ellos había proporcionado. Los visitadores también tomaron declaraciones secretas a otras personas que habían conocido (y, según resultó, odiado) a Pérez durante décadas; en agosto de 1582, Felipe les informó que necesitaba «aún más tiempo para verificar y apurar más las culpas que se van descubriendo» contra Pérez y, dado que «con el nombre y efecto de visita se podrá cubrir lo que no conviene que se entienda ni diga, me he resuelto en que, dejando de estar como agora a Antonio Pérez, se prosiga su visita y se hagan todas las diligencias que convengan en ella, con secreto». Después de muchos rodeos y repeticiones, Felipe

concluía su carta con una orden tajante: «¡Este papel quemad!».[693]

Por supuesto, Pérez ignoraba el destino que Felipe «con secreto» le había determinado cuando, en septiembre de 1582, volvió a demandar un juicio público: según Pazos, «aunque fuese cortarse la cabeza con acabar [Pérez] lo tendría por bueno». El rey ignoraba esta demanda, pero dos meses más tarde reveló a la princesa su destino en una carta sumamente condescendiente:

> Princesa de Éboli, prima: Teniendo la memoria que es razón a los muchos y buenos servicios que el príncipe Ruy Gómez de Silva, vuestro marido, me hizo, y deseando hacer merced a sus hijos y mirar por ellos, y conviniendo tanto para la conservación de su memoria, estado y hacienda, dar diferente orden en sus cosas, y en las vuestras, que hasta aquí ha habido; y siendo justo que atendáis a vuestro recogimiento, quietud y sosiego, pues ocupada con tantas y tan diversas ocupaciones y negocios lo podéis mal hacer, y ellos mismos padecerían, me he resuelto de exoneraros de la tutoría y curaduría del duque de Pastrana y de sus hermanos [hijos de la princesa].

Así pues, continuaba el rey, «he nombrado en vuestro lugar, para que sea tutor y curador por el tiempo que fuere mi voluntad», un «gobernador y justicia mayor de ese estado, dándole mi poder cumplido como rey y soberano señor a quien toca». La princesa vivió a partir de entonces bajo arresto domiciliario en su palacio de Pastrana. Esta perentoria orden entró en vigor de inmediato y el rey exigió obediencia «sin réplica ninguna, porque no se ha de dar lugar a otra cosa». Fue una pena de muerte civil contra la que no cabía apelación alguna.[694]

«Non sufficit orbis»

Una vez concluido el destino de Pérez y la princesa, Felipe dejó Lisboa en 1583 para volver a El Escorial. Allí, el rey pasaba mucho tiempo planificando una nueva operación anfibia contra la isla Terceira. Primero, tenía que satisfacer a Santa Cruz, quien «pretende el tratamiento de Grande, el cargo de capitán general del mar, la encomienda mayor de León, y la suya para

su hijo». El rey tenía que ceder en todos los puntos, «aunque es fuerte cosa», pero en sus instrucciones al marqués insistía, no sin cierta crueldad, que «lo que importa a estos reinos y a la reputación mía y vuestra acabar esto a esta vez». También insistía en «el rigor del castigo» para los que se opusieran a él: «Si tras esto se pusieren en resistencia y se entrare por fuerza de armas, no se podrá excusar que pasen por las leyes de la guerra, que tan merecidas tendrán», es decir, serían ejecutados sumariamente.[695] Justo un año después de su victoria naval, Santa Cruz llegó a Terceira con una fuerza anfibia cuyo tamaño duplicaba a la anterior —más de quince mil hombres y casi cien barcos— y sus veteranos españoles tomaron la isla por asalto. El resto del archipiélago se rindió. Por fin Felipe era dueño de Portugal y de todo su imperio.

Esta victoria desató una ola de euforia en España, y el rey no permaneció inmune a ella. Al enterarse de que el triunfo había ocurrido otra vez el día de Santa Ana, Felipe y Mateo Vázquez repararon inmediatamente en la coincidencia. Aparte de la santa, sugería Vázquez, «por la cabeza me ha pasado que devía de estar la reyna doña Anna nuestra señora supplicando a Dios por la victoria». El rey se mostró de acuerdo: «Aunque santa Anna deve tener mucha parte destos buenos sucesos, siempre he creydo que la reyna no dexa de tener su parte en ello. Y de lo que más contentamyento tengo es de parecer que es señal de aver algo de lo que aquí decís». Poco después, Felipe encargó a sus pintores de El Escorial que realizaran un cuadro de santa Ana para colocarlo en un altar del monasterio y dos frescos en la Sala de Batallas para conmemorar las victorias de Santa Cruz [véase lámina 38].[696]

Otras conmemoraciones de estas victorias tomaron un tono más agresivo. Un embajador italiano en Madrid escribió: «Se ha ordenado a un escultor del rey, se cree por orden de Su Magestad, que haga algunas medallas con empresas que

denotan señoría de Portugal, y de todo el mar océano»; mientras que un cortesano propuso el lema *Nihil nunquam occidit*, «para dar a entender […] que nunca se ponía el sol a todos los reynos de la monarquía que entonces se juntaua, porque si encubría en nuestro hemispherio, se descubría a lo otro».[697] Una medalla de esta época parecía aún más audaz: mostraba el busto del rey con la inscripción «Felipe II, rey de España y del nuevo mundo» en una cara, y en la otra un globo terráqueo con la rotunda leyenda: NON SVFFICIT ORBIS («el mundo no basta»), un lema relacionado con Alejandro Magno [véase lámina 39]. Este osado emblema pronto empezó a utilizarse de modo general como «logotipo» del nuevo imperio global: en la mansión del gobernador en Santo Domingo se hallaba una divisa de las armas reales de España que contenía un globo y una orla «en el que aparecían escritas estas palabras en latín, NON SVFFICIT ORBIS». A los ingleses les parecía «una muy notable señal y muestra de la insaciable ambición del rey español y de su nación».[698]

Estas expresiones de ambición no se limitaron a las palabras y las imágenes. En agosto de 1583, eufórico por su doble triunfo, el marqués de Santa Cruz sostenía ante Felipe que había llegado el momento de acometer otras empresas a favor de la causa de Dios, e instaba a su rey para que pusiera la mira «en Dios, ya que la causa es tan justa y suya, que desta manera tendrá el buen fin que se puede desear»:

> Las victorias tan cumplidas como ha sido Dios servido dar a Vuestra Magestad en estas islas [Azores] suelen animar a los príncipes a otras empresas, y pues Nuestro Señor hizo a Vuestra Magestad tan gran rey, justo es que siga ahora esta victoria mandando prevenir lo necesario para que el año que viene se haga la de Inglaterra […]. Y no es justo que, hallándose Vuestra Magestad en el mundo, viba y reyne una muger erege que tanto mal a causado en aquel reyno.

Desgraciadamente para España, y para el futuro de su monarquía, Felipe compartía este parecer. Respondió al marqués: «Os agradezco mucho todo lo que me dezís en la carta

de vuestra mano, offreziendo os a nueva empressa y qual la proponéis para otro año. Cosas son en que no se puede hablar con seguridad desde agora, pues dependen del tiempo y de las ocasiones que han de dar la regla después». Pero «por sí o por no, mando hazer la provisión» de municiones «y dar la priessa que se puede» en hallar todo «que os paresçe necessario para lo que se puede offrescer».[699]

Santa Cruz y su séquito se apresuraron a reunir un informe en el que abogaban por el desembarco de un poderoso contingente cerca de Londres, dado que allí tenía su sede el gobierno Tudor y era fácilmente accesible desde el mar. Además, apuntaba el marqués, una vez su fuerza expedicionaria llegara a la desembocadura del Támesis, rápidamente podrían disponer de refuerzos procedentes del Ejército de Flandes. Pero antes de que pudiera dedicar la debida atención a estas propuestas, Felipe recibió otra sugerencia extraordinaria de Gregorio XIII: debía casarse con María Estuardo. El embajador español en Roma explicó a un colega en Madrid que el papa creía «que por este camino bolvería [Felipe] otra vez a ser rey de Inglaterra». El embajador añadió, en tono de autojustificación, que «el papa me dixo espresamente que yo lo escriviesse a Su Magestad, y por el empacho he tomado para hazerlo el medio de vuestra merced». Cuando el rey leyó la carta, apenas pudo contenerse: «No tengo yo ningún empacho de que se me diga lo que conviniese», le escribió a su embajador, «mas tendríase de hazer cosa tan fuera de propósito como esta, y tanto más que sé que no podría cumplir con la obligación de poder governar aquello [Inglaterra] sin ir allá, teniendo tantas otras obligaciones que aún no se puede cumplir con todas ellas como se querría».[700] El rey no tenía más ganas de casarse con María Estuardo de las que había tenido de hacerlo con Isabel Tudor veinticinco años antes. En su lugar, le preguntó a Parma si podía prepararse para lanzar una invasión que eliminara a

Isabel.

Su sobrino no descartó la posibilidad, pero, dado el riesgo de que durante su ausencia se produjeran «socorros de Francia» a los rebeldes holandeses, instó al rey a que le permitiera completar la reconquista de los Países Bajos antes de atacar Inglaterra. Felipe estaba de acuerdo y, una vez conquistada Terceira, entregó a Parma la mayoría de sus recursos militares y financieros. Por ejemplo, en 1582, sus consejeros habían discutido las medidas para expulsar de Castilla a los moriscos: «Se devía hacer una grande expulsión, como se hizo en tiempo de los señores Reyes Cathólicos de los judíos», que «se pusiesse en execución» en el otoño de 1583 «a la buelta de la armada de las Terceras». Pero «venido a la execución se representaron grandes dificultades, porque eran menester muchas fuerças y estar desembaraçados de otras cossas que podían dar cuidado, y así nunca se llegó a ponerlo en effecto».[701] Además, el rey acumuló ingresos en un fondo de guerra. En 1584, una misión diplomática afirmó haber visto «seis arcas muy grandes» en el Alcázar de Madrid, cada una con capacidad para almacenar 400.000 escudos de oro, aparte de otras seis arcas más en reserva.[702] No era la intención del rey despilfarrar estos activos. En la primavera de 1582, al parecer por primera vez, ordenó a sus ministros de Hacienda que elaboraran un presupuesto imperial para un año entero (de junio de 1582 a junio de 1583), a fin de conseguir un flujo de dinero más estable y predecible para todas sus empresas. Las sumas requeridas eran cuantiosas —2,4 millones de ducados para los Países Bajos y 1,8 millones para Portugal—, pero don Hernando de Vega (un inquisidor que, al igual que Juan de Ovando, había pasado de la Suprema a ser presidente del Consejo de Hacienda) predijo un pequeño superávit. Felipe no estaba convencido:

> Bien se vee que será menester más para cumplir el año de 83, pues lo que se pone en la relación es poco más que para el medio año de 83; pero podrase anticipar

para el medio año último de 83 algo de lo de 84. Pero al fin se vendrá a acabar todo, si no se halla alguna buena forma. Vos lo mirad y tratad todo con el secreto que veis que el negocio requiere, y como yo lo confío de vos.[703]

En junio de 1583 —fecha en que expiraba el presupuesto de Vega— el rey llevó su planificación fiscal más lejos. «Es la necesidad presente tan grande» en los Países Bajos, informó a Vega, «que sería de mucha importancia poder proveer luego 400 o 500 mil ducados; y para adelante será muy bien que se haga la provisión por meses, de 150 a 200 mil ducados cada mes». El presidente así lo hizo, y prometió «asegurar sus necesidades» a Felipe «de manera que casi sin ministros puede pasar». Si Vega esperaba que su confianza pusiera fin a la insistencia del rey, se equivocaba. «Mucho, mucho importaría esta provisión», comenzaba el rescripto regio, y «os encargo mucho que hagáis en ello gran esfuerzo que sea con gran brevedad, porque en ello consiste todo el negocio, como he dicho, y si no, no sería de effecto ninguno». Pero a continuación su tono se suavizaba: «Muy bien ha sido que ayáis començado a tratar desta provisión grande, y así la llevad adelante y hazed que no se alza la mano della como cosa que es remedio y descanso por estos dos años de 84 y 85».[704]

Por supuesto, el duque de Parma utilizó la mayoría de los fondos recibidos de España para pagar a sus tropas, pero desvió 25.000 ducados para un propósito muy diferente: recompensar a los familiares de Baltasar Gérard, el vasallo borgoñón de Felipe que el 10 de julio de 1584 mató a Guillermo de Orange. En la corte de España, la reacción inmediata a la noticia del asesinato fue de inmensa alegría. «Esta nueva del de Orange amenezió aquí esta mañana», refería en Madrid al rey un exultante Granvela: «Algún gran bien deve querer obrar Nuestro Señor en Flandes, pues ha quitado de en medio la piedra de todo el escándalo». Mateo Vázquez también se congratuló cuando la noticia llegó a El Escorial:

> Gran nueva ha sido la muerte del de Orange, y spero en Dios que en verdad de su gran misericordia y lo que Vuestra Magestad le merece, se han de yr componiendo las cosas de manera que si huviere guerras, no sean dentro sino fuera de casa, de que resultara vivir en ella en paz, y hazer hazienda de la misma guerra.

Felipe contestó: «Es así esto como decis y parece que ha sido a gran coyuntura, y así espero en Dios que suceda bien lo de allí». Al día siguiente, Granvela señalaba una feliz coincidencia: la muerte de Orange había ocurrido exactamente un mes después de la del duque de Alençon y Anjou, instalado por los rebeldes como «príncipe y señor de los Países Bajos»: «A 10 de junio murió Alançon; a 10 de julio Oranges; si a 10 deste [mes de agosto], día de San Lorenço, muriesse la reyna madre d'Alançon [Catalina de Médicis] poco se perdería». Don Juan de Idiáquez esperaba que la reina de Inglaterra hiciera «el treyntenario de Orange, como él hizo el de Alançon».[705]

¿David o Goliat?

Este regocijo resultó prematuro. El duque de Alençon y Anjou era el último miembro varón de la Casa de Valois y, dado que en Francia la Ley Sálica limitaba la sucesión real a la línea masculina, esto convertía al protestante Enrique de Borbón, rey de Navarra, en el nuevo presunto heredero al trono francés, lo que suscitaba la amenaza de un régimen abiertamente hostil en París. Felipe tenía que reaccionar. Durante muchos años había ofrecido al duque de Guisa subsidios para sostener una organización paramilitar, la Liga, dedicada a garantizar que Enrique III fuera sucedido por un católico: nada más enterarse de la muerte de Anjou, Felipe aumentó sus pagos a Guisa y prometió una intervención militar en toda regla en caso de que estallara una guerra civil. A cambio, el duque prometía promover los planes de Felipe en el resto de Europa.

Felipe empezó a cosechar los beneficios de esta iniciativa casi inmediatamente. En marzo de 1585, aislado e intimidado,

Enrique III firmó un tratado con Guisa, cediendo varias ciudades importantes para que quedaran bajo el control de la Liga, y prometió trabajar por la erradicación del protestantismo en Francia. Entre tanto, Felipe firmó un acuerdo con el duque Carlos Manuel de Saboya en el que se estipulaba una dote de 500.000 ducados cuando este se casara con su hija menor, Catalina Micaela. La ceremonia se celebró en Zaragoza en marzo de 1585 y, un año más tarde, Catalina dio a luz al primer nieto del rey. Dado que tanto la madre de Carlos Manuel como la de Catalina eran de la Casa de Valois, el niño era un potencial heredero al trono de Francia. Al mismo tiempo, en los Países Bajos, gracias a la llegada de tropas y fondos, Parma forzó la rendición de todas las ciudades importantes del sur de los Países Bajos: Bruselas, Gante, Brujas, Malinas y, en agosto de 1585, Amberes.

Estos triunfos, tanto militares como diplomáticos, alarmaron a Isabel Tudor, porque, si el rey conseguía el control de Francia, además del de Portugal y todos los Países Bajos, la Inglaterra protestante estaba perdida. Su secretario de Estado, sir Francis Walsingham, preparaba «un plan para enojar al rey de España». Sugería un embargo comercial contra los Países Bajos; la toma de barcos de pesca españoles alrededor de Terranova; una expedición anfibia liderada por sir Francis Drake para atacar las Indias orientales; y ayuda a los rebeldes holandeses y portugueses. Pero su única acción inequívoca consistió en decretar un embargo en abril de 1585 sobre todo el comercio inglés con los Países Bajos españoles. Esta acción, por sí sola, convenció a Felipe de que debía contraatacar y, un mes después, firmó una cédula para embargar todos los barcos extranjeros fondeados en los puertos de la península ibérica, excepto los franceses. Esta decisión resultó desastrosa, porque, cuando un alcalde trató de arrestar uno de los barcos ingleses, el Primrose, el patrón se abrió camino luchando, llevándose con él

no solo al alcalde, sino también una copia de la cédula.

Isabel y sus ministros se pusieron a analizar la formulación exacta de la cédula entregada al Primrose, descubriendo inmediatamente que afectaba solo a los barcos procedentes de territorios protestantes, excluyendo expresamente a los franceses. El interrogatorio de los españoles capturados a bordo del Primrose resultó poco tranquilizador: uno de ellos informó a sus captores de que «al enterarse de que los holandeses buscaban la ayuda de Inglaterra y temiendo que se les ayudara», el rey Felipe «pretendía mediante este arresto que los ingleses no se atrevieran a hacerlo». Más alarmante aún les pareció a los ingleses una carta interceptada, de un comerciante español a su socio en Francia, donde aquel hacía referencia inequívoca a «la guerra que tenemos con Ynglaterra».[706]

Estas revelaciones tuvieron lugar después de que Isabel descubriera complots para asesinarla y colocar en el trono a María Estuardo. Don Bernardino de Mendoza, el embajador español, estaba tan claramente implicado en estas conspiraciones que a principios de 1584 le expulsó del país. El asesinato de Orange poco después confirmó que Felipe no iba a detenerse ante nada para eliminar a sus enemigos, y por eso Isabel resucitó el plan de Walsingham «para enojar al rey de España». En junio de 1585, poco después del regreso del Primrose, la reina ordenó un ataque contra la flota pesquera ibérica en Terranova, y comenzó a conceder patentes de corso a sus súbditos afectados por el embargo, permitiéndoles resarcirse de sus pérdidas saqueando cualquier barco que navegara bajo la enseña de Felipe. En agosto, Isabel firmó un tratado con enviados de los rebeldes holandeses por el cual prometía proveerles con más de 6.000 soldados regulares para su ejército, pagar una cuarta parte de su presupuesto de defensa y proporcionarles un consejero experimentado para que dirigiera su ejército; y otorgó a Drake permiso para zarpar de Plymouth

con una flota de más de treinta navíos, que transportaba 1.600 soldados.

En octubre de 1585, Drake llegó a Galicia, donde sus hombres pasaron diez días saqueando los pueblos vecinos a Bayona (Baiona), profanando iglesias, haciéndose con el botín y capturando rehenes. Aquello era mucho más que «un plan para enojar al rey de España»: era una declaración de guerra contra Felipe. El rey que en Tomar «parecía al rey David» empezaba a asemejarse más a Goliat.

16. «El monarca más poderoso de la cristiandad»

Casi todos los vasallos castellanos de Felipe celebraron el hecho de que la unión de las coronas en 1580 le hiciese monarca de «innumerable, por no dezir infinita, multitud de reinos, señoríos, provincias y varios estados que tiene en todas las cuatro partidas del mundo», creando «el mayor imperio que desde la creación del mismo hasta nuestros tiempos se ha conocido». Esta acumulación de poder sin precedentes también impresionó a los demás. Según un inglés, el rey de España era ahora «el monarca más poderoso de la cristiandad, que tiene en sus manos los nervios de la guerra —dinero— y tiene ahora un mando tan amplio, que en sus dominios el sol ni se levanta ni se pone». Según otro, Felipe se había convertido en «un príncipe cuyo imperio se extendía tanto y tan lejos, más que el de ningún otro emperador anterior a él, que podría afirmar sin temor a equivocarse, *Sol mihi semper lucet*: el sol siempre brilla sobre mí».[707]

«Terrible gente son los físicos»

Pero ¿quién era ese «mí» sobre el que el sol siempre brillaba? En 1582, el flamenco Felipe de Caverel, recibido en varias ocasiones por el rey en Lisboa, escribió una vívida descripción de este en el momento álgido de su poder. «Tiene una estatura algo menor que la media», comentaba Caverel, «de hombros anchos y amplio tórax, y una cara grande y pálida» con labios rojos y gruesos, «especialmente el inferior, un rasgo de los Austrias a cuya estirpe pertenece. Sus ojos están algo enrojecidos, como los de quienes leen y trabajan mucho, incluso de noche». Lleva una barba que, al igual que su cabello, es de color totalmente blanco, «lo que parece algo prematuro» (el rey tenía cincuenta y seis años). Cuando un año después

Felipe regresó a Madrid, el embajador francés afirmó que «el rey comienza a envejecer» y que «su rostro ya no es tan claro, lo que demuestra que su espíritu está cansado por las preocupaciones, haciendo que parezca más melancólico de lo que solía ser», mientras que el cardenal Granvela notaba que su amo «lleva la barba un poco más larga de lo habitual, y más redondeada, igual que lo solía hacer [Carlos V] y, como le han salido canas, ahora se parece mucho a su padre».[708] Pero el parecido se quedó ahí: Felipe viviría hasta los setenta y un años, mientras que su padre murió a los cincuenta y ocho.

Ciertas elecciones en su estilo de vida explican la longevidad del rey. Después de que dejara de participar en torneos hacia 1562, sufrió pocos accidentes, aunque un día de 1581, cuando entró en un barco, «metí una pierna por el agujero del mástil», que «me dí un golpe en la espinilla que me dolió harto por un rato y se me desolló un poco; pero no fue nada y ahora la tengo ya buena». Igualmente, aparte de un catarro que casi le costó la vida en 1580, sufrió pocas enfermedades hasta que cumplió los sesenta años en 1587. Por supuesto, como cualquier otra persona, sufrió numerosos problemas de salud menores. Sobre todo, debido a las largas horas que pasaba sentado, y a la ausencia de fibra en su dieta, a menudo Felipe sufría de estreñimiento, lo que explica las «tres xortijas de hueso que dicen ser buenas para las almorranas» encontradas entre sus cosas tras su muerte. La misma fuente hace referencia a «un vaso de plata […] para tomar purgas de su Magestad»; mientras que los informes de su botica demuestran que se le administraban frecuentes dosis de trementina, vomitivos y enemas. En una ocasión, informó a sus hijas de que «tomo jarabes a las mañanas, y bien bellacos porque tienen ruibarbo, y bebo, una vez de dos que bebo, de agua de agrimonia».[709] El rey también cuidó su salud comiendo con prudencia, haciendo ejercicio regularmente y prestando mucha atención a su higiene

personal. Como observó su ayuda de cámara poco después de la muerte del rey, Felipe «era por naturaleza el hombre más limpio, aseado y cuidadoso para con su persona que jamás ha habido en la tierra». Hay una prueba llamativa en el inventario de «los bienes muebles que pertenecieron» al rey fallecido. Se notaron «una pieça de oro para labar los ojos; cinco yerros grandes de sacar muelas y siete más pequeños de limpiar dientes, todos dorados […], un punzón y una paletilla para las orejas y otra pieza para raer la lengua», así como una cajita «para tener polbos de dientes para su magestad» y «un palo de oro con los cabos vueltos para dar cauterio a los dientes».[710]

A pesar de estas medidas preventivas, en varias ocasiones las afecciones estomacales obligaron a guardar cama al «monarca más poderoso de la cristiandad». En 1581 comunicó a sus hijas que «estos días he andado un poco desconcertado. No sé si tiene la culpa de ello haber comido más melón algunos días antes […]. He estado dos días en la cama». Dos años más tarde, «estando yo oyendo misa […] me tomó una cosa en el estómago de revolvérseme»; y en 1588, «tras aver estado ayer bueno, y esta noche, en levantándome me ha dado un dolor d[e] estómago o de tripas, que no sé lo que es, porque entre lo uno y lo otro me [ha] dado harta pena».[711] Por supuesto, el rey también sufría catarros. Una noche de febrero de 1576 envió a Mateo Vázquez un completo informe médico: «Ya oy no puedo más, y es tarde; y no se me quiere acabar esto del pecho, que es lo que más me fatiga; que lo de la gota, aunque duele a ratos, no es tanto que embaraçe la cabeça, ¡mas el catarro, sí!». Un día de 1584, advirtió a Vázquez de que «por el catarro no os e vuelto el papel desto, que bien lo he deseado; y agora puedo menos porque tengo ruin cabeça». Tres años más tarde, se lamentaba a Vázquez de que «no os puedo embiar [más] por agora porque estoy con mucho catarro, y no cierto para leer y escrivir», y cuando a pesar de todo llegaron más papeles, el rey

perdió la paciencia y garabateó en una consulta (al reenviarla): «¡Mirad qué buen remedio para el catarro!».[712]

De vez en cuando, las quejas de mala salud regias sonaban sospechosas. En 1573 Felipe escribió al duque de Alba: «Creo que ha tenido alguna culpa en las tercianas el cuydado con que me trae lo de aý»; y en octubre de 1588 informó a Mateo Vázquez de que «traygo buena tos y catarro, y veo claro que es de los papeles, porque en tomándolos me carga la tos», aunque el estrés grave también ocasiona problemas físicos.[713] De hecho, con frecuencia la gota le impedía dedicarse a resolver los asuntos pendientes. Su Majestad «no podía responder a sus consultas por tener la gota en la mano derecha», anotaba un secretario un día de 1573; en otra ocasión el propio rey explicó a sus ministros que se levantó «oy tarde por averme tocado oy la gota en un pie»; y de vez en cuando «Su Magestad queda con la gota en la muñeca derecha», y, por ser diestro, esto le impedía escribir. En años posteriores permanecía en su lecho media hora, una vez despertado, mientras su ayuda de cámara le masajeaba los pies para aliviarle los dolores.[714] Parece probable que Felipe sufriera de una forma de artritis, similar a la gota que afligió a su padre.

En general, aunque Felipe tenía varios médicos a su servicio, a menudo se mostró reacio a aceptar sus consejos porque, según sus propias palabras, «terrible gente son los físicos».[715] En 1572, cuando su hijo y heredero, de solo nueve meses, cayó enfermo y los galenos de la Casa Real culparon al ama del príncipe, Felipe mostró un absoluto desprecio por su opinión: «Son tan diversas las relaciones que se dan los [médicos], tanto en lo de la medicina como en lo de la limpieza, que no sabe hombre de qué hechar mano». Poco después, se convenció de que (como con los arquitectos, teólogos y demás) él entendía mejor la situación que los expertos: lo que necesitaba el niño era un «buen regimiento y

tener un poco de cuenta con la salud. Mejor es escusar purgas y sangrías, que es muy malo a vezes, y con el buen regimiento se consigue lo mysmo y con más seguridad». Cuando los médicos insistieron en administrar sus remedios clásicos, el rey contraatacó: «Es mucho de myrar lo del purgar tanto al príncipe como a la ama, que podría molestar más que aprovechar». Su omnisciencia médica no había disminuido cuatro lustros más tarde. En septiembre de 1590, muchos cortesanos de El Escorial cayeron enfermos, y uno de ellos pidió que les llevasen diariamente más de cien kilos de fruta y dos cargas de hielo de los «pozos de hielo» creados por el rey en lo alto de la sierra de Guadarrama. El rey no estaba de acuerdo: «Para los enfermos más me parece que los médicos les quitan la fruta y nieve a algunos […] y en invierno se podría escusar de traer nieve algunos meses del, pues yo no bebo con ellas, ya los demás más les haze daño que provecho en aquel tiempo».[716]

El rey y su papeleo

Gracias a su salud de hierro, como afirmó Felipe de Caverel durante su estancia lisboeta, «Su Majestad insiste en que prácticamente todo pase por sus manos». Esto hacía que las quejas del rey sobre su agotamiento también persistieran. «Se ha juntado tanto y me ha detenido tanto, de manera que no puedo ya más, y es bien tarde», se quejó a Vázquez en febrero de 1584; «Nunca he visto que cargue tanto ni tantos como agora».[717] Pocos meses después, el rey aceptó la propuesta de su experimentado secretario para reducir el montón de papeles que llegaban a su mesa: uno de los ministros de confianza que siempre le acompañaban leería las consultas enviadas por un determinado consejo, y «las que os pareciere bien el parecer se apruebe, y las que no o lo apuntéis o lo pongáis con la respuesta, y todo esto sin verlas yo, pues después al señalarlas las veré». Vázquez prometió que «yo por ver a Vuestra Magestad

en algún alivio querría estar como esclavo humilíssimo de Vuestra Magestad, occupado días y noche», y propuso que cada uno de los ministros de confianza pasara media hora con el rey para resolver cualquier dificultad. Felipe aceptó esto también, aunque con recelos:

> Todavía habrá harta ocupación, pues habrá menester un rato para vos [Inquisición y la Cámara] y otro para el conde de Chinchón [Aragón y Italia], y otro para don Juan de Idiáquez [Estado], y otro para Antonio de Eraso [Indias y Hacienda], y algunos para don Christóval [de Moura] para Portugal, ¡con que no sobrará mucho tiempo! Mas escusarse el escrivir será alivio.[718]

Al año siguiente, Felipe mandó venir de Italia a don Juan de Zúñiga, hijo y tocayo de su ayo, para presidir este grupo de ministros veteranos, conocido como la Junta de Noche, porque se reunía todas las noches para revisar las consultas que cada consejo había preparado por la mañana.

El rey recogido

Como un veterano ministro señaló en esta época, el rey

> es amigo de la quietud, y de governar y mandar el mundo callando, y con mano de personas que hacen lo mismo; y aunque tiene mucha quenta de las calidades de personas para servirse dellas, gran experiencia tenemos de quanto más le satisfacen, entre estas mismas, las que hacen menos ruido.[719]

Para conseguir «menos ruido», el rey salía con mucha más frecuencia de su capital. Después de la consagración de la basílica de San Lorenzo de El Escorial en 1584, pasaba casi todos los veranos y festivos mayores allí. También realizó prolongadas estancias tanto en Aranjuez, en primavera, como en El Pardo, en otoño. Incluso en el Alcázar de Madrid, donde pasaba sus inviernos, unos cambios arquitectónicos crearon un complejo de habitaciones privadas, de manera que el rey rara vez aparecía en público. En 1587 un observador señaló que Felipe «está todavía recogido en el quarto nuevo que se acabó poco ha, arrimado a la torrezilla de vidrieras». Todo el mundo sabía, continuaba, «que avía mandado hazer este quarto con fin de recogerse en él los inviernos, y hechase bien de ver, pues se

defiende en él mejor que en El Pardo ni en El Escurial de dar audiencias». El cronista Luis Cabrera de Córdoba se mostraba de acuerdo: «Aun a misa no salió a la capilla en las fiestas de la Pascua de la Natividad, oyéndola en el oratorio con tan poco rumor como si no estuviera en palacio».[720] El rey consiguió un mayor grado de recogimiento aun durante sus viajes: iba y venía entre los distintos sitios reales «de secreto en un coche», e incluso «en coche corridas las cortinas», para no tener que ver a sus súbditos y que estos no pudieran verle a él.[721]

Sin embargo, el rey no podía esconderse de sus papeles, aunque parte de la culpa era suya por su insistencia en tratar personalmente los asuntos más triviales. En 1586, por ejemplo, dedicó muchas horas, si no días, a preparar su *Pragmática de las cortesías*. Este documento establecía detalladamente los tratamientos que debían darse en la relación entre señores y vasallos, e incluso entre padres e hijos; especificaba a quién se le podía aplicar o no el «vos»; y especificaba la forma correcta para dirigirse y saludar a los ministros, los miembros de la nobleza y la Iglesia, a la familia real y al propio rey, quien insistió en que, en lugar de dirigirse a él como «Sacra Católica Real Majestad», a partir de ese momento debían llamarle «Señor». Felipe revisó al menos seis borradores de esta pragmática, hasta el punto de que ya no encontraba las palabras adecuadas: en la cláusula que establecía el importante tema de quién tenía derecho a colocar coroneles sobre sus escudos de armas, finalmente fue vencido por la sintaxis y, frustrado, ordenó a Vázquez: «Póngase lo que fuere mejor "para" o "por", porque no me determyno qual es mejor». Esto ocurrió el 11 de septiembre de 1586: el rey se desvivió por los detalles durante casi un mes y, cuando el texto final regresó a Vázquez el 8 de octubre, Felipe aún tenía algunas dudas sobre él: «Aquí va firmada, que no ha sido poco acabarse según lo que ha. Que dura una palabrilla o dos, creo que se dexaron de borrar, mas no importa nada».[722] ¡¿No importa

nada?! Después de preparar tantos borradores, incluso el paciente Vázquez tuvo que morderse la lengua.

En este caso la obsesiva atención del rey quizá fuese justificada, pues la *Pragmática de las cortesías* indignó a cortesanos y embajadores por igual, mientras que el papa la incluyó en el índice de libros prohibidos y amenazó al rey con la excomunión. Pero ¿era realmente necesario que el propio rey interviniera en otros asuntos aparentemente intrascendentes como la disposición de los beneficios eclesiásticos vacantes tras la muerte del cardenal Granvela, el protocolo en palacio (quién podía entrar en cada estancia; quién podía viajar, en qué coche y cómo debía ser recibido en cada ciudad durante el viaje regio a Zaragoza; y quién debía ocupar el puesto de «ecuyer de cocina de sus altezas», al que se presentaron veinte solicitantes)?

Tantas «menudencias» distraían y agotaban al rey, de modo que la montaña de consultas que esperaban su atención crecía inexorablemente. En 1588, cuando Vázquez dijo al rey que tenía ochocientas consultas esperando, Felipe contestó, con cansancio, que las cosas no estaban tan mal: el montón de consultas sin leer que tenía en su despacho «solo» sumaban trescientas, y prometió revisarlas. Pocos días después, un ayuda de cámara protestó enérgicamente a un colega «que podrá vuestra merced cessar en embiar papeles hasta que Su Magestad esté para entender en ellos; y cierto que algunos de los que aquí estamos, andamos atortujados de leer cartas y otros papeles que vienen de tantas partes, y ¡de tanto, tanto, tanto scrivir!».[723] En 1589, el general de la orden de San Jerónimo, cuyos predecesores habían disfrutado de acceso directo al rey durante la construcción de San Lorenzo, se quejó de que Felipe todavía no le había contestado a una carta suya. Felipe confesó a Vázquez: «Yo tuve la culpa de la dilación, que con las muchas ocupaciones no lo pude ver ni ordenar antes la respuesta, y así se le responded: que no se puede siempre lo que se querría». La

situación empeoró aún más tras la muerte de Vázquez en mayo de 1591. Tres meses después, su sucesor como secretario privado se quejó de que varios documentos importantes no habían sido devueltos con una decisión, y una vez más Felipe se disculpó alegando que la presión de los asuntos por atender era tal que no le dejaba tiempo para dedicarse a todas las muchas cosas que debía resolver: «Sin embargo voy a hacer todo lo posible».[724]

Muchos criticaban el estilo epistolar de Felipe. En 1577, el limosnero real, don Luis Manrique, presentó un escrito en el que detallaba «algunos cargos que se le hacían [al rey] dentro de su misma casa y cámara, por las casas y calles del lugar y en las celdas de los religiosos doctos y siervos de Dios y de Vuestra Majestad». A menos que el rey cambiara su forma de actuar, advertía Manrique, Dios enviaría «un gran castigo general» a todo el reino. La acusación más grave hacía referencia a «no aparecer Vuestra Majestad» más en público, y a que «no se fía de nadie, ni da oídos con eficacia a personas». Manrique continuaba: «En tiempos pasados, se entendía que Vuestra Majestad no hacía más de lo que uno o dos le decían y que por aquéllos se gobernaba todo», sin duda una alusión a Espinosa; pero en aquel momento, «por evitar aquella opinión, ha dado Vuestra Majestad en no confiarse de nadie» y en «negociar por billetes y por escrito». Según «muchos», Felipe «no negocia por escrito porque le parezca esto más conveniente, sino porque no le hable nadie». «No embió Dios a Vuestra Magestad» para que pasara sus días «leyendo ni escribiendo, ni aun contemplando ni rezando», bramaba Manrique, «metiéndose en una torre sin puertas y ventanas para no ver a los hombres ni que ellos pudiesen ver a Vuestra Magestad».[725]

Al parecer, la anexión de Portugal apagó las críticas, pero en 1586 Sixto V le proporcionó la primera «lición» de gobierno que Felipe recibía desde su periodo de aprendizaje. El papa,

escribiendo como «el padre más cariñoso escribiría a su hijo predilecto», afirmaba haber estado rezando especialmente por la salud y longevidad del rey, porque de ellas dependía el bienestar de la Iglesia católica; y le instaba a sortear dos peligros. En primer lugar, Felipe debía prestar atención a la advertencia de Jetró a Moisés de que no podía hacerlo todo solo: «Te agotarás tú y las personas que están contigo, porque el trabajo es demasiado para ti. No puedes hacerlo todo tú solo». Segundo, Felipe no debía creer todo lo que sus ministros le decían, porque estos eran parciales, y, por tanto, para las decisiones importantes debía basarse solo en su propio criterio.[726]

«La falta de cabezas»

El hijo predilecto no estaba dispuesto a cambiar su costumbre de pedir el parecer de uno o más consejeros de confianza antes de tomar cualquier decisión y, egoístamente, el pánico hacía presa en él cada vez que alguno de sus ministros principales caía enfermo o moría. Cuando el conde de Chinchón enfermó en 1576, el rey escribió con autocompasión: «Plazerá a Dios darle salud, que harta falta me haría si otra cosa fuese, si no es en desdicha mýa faltar los que he menester más que los que sobran». Al empeorar la salud del conde, Felipe repitió que con su muerte «cierto me haría mucha falta porque me he tenido por bien servido dél, y no sé si hallaría quien […] supliese si falta; y creo que no».[727] Cuando Mateo Vázquez hizo una romería de tres días a Barajas y pidió permiso para retirarse a servir a Dios allí, el rey se quedó horrorizado. «Para el cuerpo, muy buena es la vida de aldea», admitía, «mas para la ánima mucho más servicio entiendo que se puede hazer a Dios por acá que en ella, y más en lo que tanto importa y es menester para esto como ayudarme, que sin muchas y buenas ayudas no sé cómo podría llevar tanta carga a cuestas […]. Estoy yo muy confiado que vos llevaréis de buena gana la parte del trabajo

que os toca». Y en 1580, cuando el presidente del Consejo de Órdenes enfermó, la reacción de Felipe fue la misma, pues si moría «harta falta me ha de hazer, y es terrible cosa los que me han faltado y los pocos que quedan».[728]

A Felipe le preocupaba tanto «el cuydado de ver los que van faltando» como «la dificultad de hallar personas quales son menester para que los cargos estén bien probeydos, a que tanto se deve atender». Cuando un oficial en Nápoles envió al rey una carta de queja sobre la necesidad de elegir mejores oficiales, porque «le pone su rey su honra y conciençia en su mano», Felipe garabateó malhumorado: «Si tan fáciles fuessen estas cosas de hazer como de decir, y yo fuese Dios para saver lo que ay dentro de cada uno, no habría más que pedir; mas somos hombres y no dioses».[729] En 1572, un ministro encargado de asesorar sobre cuáles eran los candidatos adecuados para presidir el Consejo Real descartó a casi todos por una razón u otra: al doctor Martín de Velasco porque, a pesar de ser un clérigo distinguido en derecho canónico y un ministro capaz, tenía «hijos y nietos»; a don Antonio de Padilla porque era demasiado bajo de estatura para imponer respeto («el tamaño de la persona le desfavorecía, por ser pequeño de cuerpo, y convenir que las personas tan públicas como presidentes […] representan de todas maneras autoridad)»; etcétera. Cinco años después, cuando el rey buscaba un nuevo embajador ante la Santa Sede, Mateo Vázquez presentó una lista de siete aristócratas castellanos, con el comentario «verdaderamente conviene sacar destos señores fuera de España», para que «sepan servir en todas partes». El rey seguía sin estar convencido: «En lo más destos de Roma se me ofrecen inconvenientes. Myrad si se os ofrecerán más». Al final, no nombró a ninguno de ellos.[730]

Felipe siempre seleccionó a sus consejeros con independencia de su extracción social. Muchos habían

ascendido a través de la jerarquía de plazas de asiento reservadas para los alumnos de los colegios mayores (por ejemplo, Diego de Espinosa y Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce); y un sorprendente número de destacados ministros eran hijos ilegítimos (Antonio Pérez, Mateo Vázquez, Juan de Ovando y Antonio Gracián) o descendían de conversos (Gonzalo Pérez y, probablemente, Diego de Espinosa), circunstancias que hubiesen impedido su ascenso en otros ámbitos de la vida. El rey llegó a apreciar el talento de los demás a través de sus padres (Granvela, don Juan de Idiáquez y Antonio Pérez eran hijos de secretarios reales; don Luis de Requesens y don Juan de Zúñiga eran hijos del ayo del rey), o de sus tíos (Juan Vázquez de Molina, sobrino de Francisco de Los Cobos, y su sobrino, Juan Vázquez de Salazar; don Francisco de Bobadilla, sobrino del conde de Chinchón). Felipe también nombró a muchos prelados como presidentes de sus consejos (seis de los ocho presidentes del Consejo de Indias) e incluso como virreyes, aunque, a partir del Concilio de Trento, tuvo que conseguir en cada caso un permiso especial de Roma, debido al requisito de que todos los obispos residieran en sus diócesis. También hizo abundante uso de clérigos de menor rango como secretarios (Gonzalo Pérez, Mateo Vázquez, Gabriel de Zayas) e incluso como embajadores (Álvaro de la Quadra, Diego Guzmán de Silva).

Sin embargo, Felipe buscó a la mayoría de sus virreyes y embajadores entre las filas de la aristocracia española. En 1575, cuando intentaba encontrar al candidato ideal para ejercer de virrey de Nápoles, «y aviéndolo yo pensado mucho estos días, me parece que él que ay agora más apropósito para allí, o, por mejor decir, con menos inconvenientes, que sin muchos no se puede aver nadie, es el marqués de Mondéjar; porque en todos los demás», se lamentaba el rey, «hallo tantos inconvenientes que no me atrebería a nombrarlos para allí». Cuatro años más tarde, mientras repasaba una larga lista de nobles propuestos

por Vázquez como posibles sustitutos para el difunto mayordomo mayor de la reina, el rey volvió a quejarse: estaba «con mucho deseo de acertar», pero, añadió cansado, «no ay duda sino que no se hallará como yo lo quixiera, pero es menester tomar de lo que ay».[731]

En la primera mitad de su reinado, Felipe abordó el problema de la «falta de cabezas» aumentando las filas de la aristocracia; creó seis nuevos ducados (todos para Ruy Gómez y sus aliados), diecinueve nuevos marquesados y dos nuevos condados (muchos de ellos para miembros de las nuevas familias ducales y el resto para los linajes de larga tradición, como los Zúñiga). Sin embargo, durante el resto de su reinado, Felipe solo creó siete nuevos títulos de nobleza y dejó vacantes numerosos puestos en la Casa Real ocupados tradicionalmente por nobles (no hubo ningún caballerizo mayor a partir de 1579, ni ningún mayordomo mayor después de 1582). El catalizador de este cambio fue, probablemente, el comportamiento desafiante del duque de Alba *(véase capítulo 14)*, junto con los planes de algunos grandes para protestar, en febrero de 1580, por la detención y encarcelamiento sin juicio de la princesa de Éboli. El presidente del Consejo de Castilla avisó al rey, en nombre de un grande, de que algunos de los nobles reunidos en Madrid para jurar lealtad al nuevo príncipe de Asturias «tenían concertado, acabado el juramento, suplicar a Vuestra Magestad la soltura de la [princesa] de Éboli. Dígele que no sabía cuán acertado era esto, que lo debía mirar mucho». La respuesta de Felipe fue a la vez firme y despreciativa: «Muy bien respondiste», escribió, «porque cierto no sería acertado, sino muy errado, y que me obligaría a no darles la respuesta que yo siempre deseo dar a todos. Y así procurad que se desvíe por buen modo».[732]

Muchos nobles ya consideraban el servicio en la Casa Real poco atrayente. Algunos rechazaron de plano los puestos que se

les ofrecían, mientras que otros accedieron a servir solo tras largas negociaciones para obtener importantes recompensas por adelantado. Así, en 1568, Felipe pidió a don Luis de Requesens que sirviera como lugarteniente a don Juan de Austria, capitán general del mar, pero este exigió además el puesto de virrey de Sicilia; ante la renuencia del rey, Requesens solicitó (y obtuvo) el rango de consejero de Estado y Guerra, la garantía de que su hijo le sucedería como comendador mayor de Castilla, más «15.000 ducados de ayuda de costa por una vez», 10.000 «cada año por el offiçio» y «1.500 para gentiles hombres que anduuiessen cabe su persona». Cinco años más tarde, Requesens declinó durante seis meses su nombramiento como gobernador general de los Países Bajos hasta que Felipe prometió proporcionarle el dinero suficiente para que su hija pudiera casarse con el marqués de Los Vélez.[733] Otro enorme caso de chantaje ocurrió en 1588, cuando el rey nombró al duque de Medina Sidonia como capitán general del mar. En una carta para Mateo Vázquez, con quien supuso (acertadamente) que Felipe hablaría del asunto, el aristócrata con más recursos de España afirmó que «dexo en mi casa muchas deudas, una mujer moça, y cuatro hijos (el mayor de nueve años.) Llévame esto con una pena terrible, haziendo de my un gran sacrificio». Por eso pidió al rey que le concediera dos encomiendas de la orden de Santiago para sus hijos «antes que me embarque». La exigencia del duque irritaba a Felipe, pero dijo a Vázquez: «Le hazed una respuesta mya muy sabrosa, asegurándole que en cualquier caso que le suceda que espero yo en Dios que ha de ser muy bien, tendré la quenta que es razón con sus hijos». Añadió: «Y para con vos: yo pienso dar dos encomiendas a dos hijos a su buelta, y también si él faltase (que espero en Dios que no haría), pero no conviene decírselo agora ni a nadie hasta entonces».[734]

«De la risa al cuchillo del rey no ay dos dedos»

Incluso cuando conseguía persuadir a los candidatos adecuados para que prestaran sus servicios, en algunas ocasiones el rey se sentía decepcionado o incluso traicionado. En tales casos, la caída de los ministros desgraciados aconteció tan rápidamente que el refrán «De la risa al cuchillo del rey no ay dos dedos» se convirtió en el más conocido veredicto sobre Felipe. Fue popularizado tanto por los ministros del rey (Antonio Pérez, «no hay dedos de su risa al cuchillo»; Jerónimo Gassol, «no ay peor fama que la del rey: que en riendo manda matar, y en riendo manda destruyr»), como por el cortesano e historiador Cabrera de Córdoba («la risa y su cuchillo eran confines»).[735] Y, en verdad, Felipe castigó repentinamente a algunos ministros destacados: encarceló a Antonio Pérez y desterró a don Antonio de Toledo, y, aunque ambos habían trabajado a su lado durante muchos años, el rey se negó a verles nunca más. Felipe se mostraba más implacable aún con aquellos ministros que pensaba que le habían traicionado. En 1570 aprobó el asesinato judicial del barón de Montigny, quien había servido al rey y a su padre como cortesano y diplomático desde 1548 *(véase capítulo 8)*, y en 1578 el de Juan de Escobedo, un prominente ministro real durante doce años *(véase capítulo 14)*. Seis años más tarde, Felipe encarceló a don Martín de Acuña, quien anteriormente había negociado la tregua hispano-otomana, y cuando este confesó bajo tortura haber vendido secretos de Estado a los turcos, el rey le sentenció a ser estrangulado en su celda. Sin embargo, continuó favoreciendo a los familiares de los reos. La esposa y los hijos de Pérez recibieron una pensión del Estado hasta que murieron; Pedro de Escobedo siguió como secretario real; y Felipe permitió al hijo de Acuña que heredara parte de la pensión de su padre y nombró a su hermano castellano de Milán y, más tarde, embajador en Saboya. Esto era lo habitual. Según fray Diego de Chaves, quien probablemente conocía a Felipe mejor que nadie, «no

acostumbr[ó] Su Magestad de descomponer a nadie sin deméritos, sino honrrar y acrescentar a los que le siruen». Y, añadía Chaves, «toca a su reputación boluer por su honor por no dar a entender que erró en la elección o que el [ministro] ha desmerecido la merced que hasta aquí le ha hecho».[736]

Felipe tenía tres mecanismos para controlar a sus servidores: la intervención directa del propio rey, la visita y la Inquisición. En primer lugar, aparte de la posibilidad de escribir «al rey en su mano» *(véase capítulo 4)*, los grupos de súbditos insatisfechos con cualquier funcionario real tenían el derecho de enviar una delegación a la corte. Así, en 1579, el rey le recordaba al virrey de Nápoles «que nunca ha sido ni es de nuestra mente y intención estorvar que mis vassallos […] no tengan recurso a Nos, siempre que se ofresciere causa bastante por la cual convenga hazerlo». Aprovechando esta dispensa, de todos los rincones del imperio llegaban delegaciones a las que, por lo que sabemos, el rey siempre atendía. A pesar de la barrera que representaba la distancia, mostró siempre una especial preocupación por sus súbditos de las Américas, «para que las podamos recebir y ser informado de lo que por ellas se nos avisare», una orden que repitió al menos cinco veces durante su reinado.[737] Además, gracias a su insistencia en firmar en persona todas las cédulas y cartas emitidas en su nombre, a veces Felipe se enteraba directamente de una injusticia o un abuso. Por ejemplo, el hijo de un oficial del Consejo de Indias utilizó sus contactos para robar hasta mil ducados de plata americana de un barco recién llegado a Sevilla. Fue descubierto y, en 1582, el Consejo de Indias le condenó a cuatro años de destierro y una multa de cincuenta ducados, que se redujo a la mitad tras la apelación. Este castigo fue extremadamente indulgente, pero, al año siguiente, el condenado cometió la imprudencia de volver a apelar al consejo y, sin duda movidos por el respeto a su padre, sus miembros pidieron que el rey

volviera a ser clemente. A pesar de que esta consulta solo era una más de las muchas que llegaron al despacho de Felipe aquel día, captó su atención. «Este delito fue grave y digno de mucho castigo», reprendió al consejo, «y ya que se moderó la sentencia en la revista —que se debiera y pudiera excusar— no hay porqué ahora se le alçe un solo día, ni se le perdone, sino que se cumpla enteramente».[738]

En segundo lugar, cada oficial con cargo judicial en la Monarquía española tenía que someterse a un periodo de escrutinio, conocido como juicio de residencia, inmediatamente después de finalizar la prestación de sus servicios. Durante este proceso público, que podía durar dos meses, cualquiera podía presentar «capítulos» alegando actos indebidos, y el juez (generalmente el sucesor del oficial) tenía la obligación de investigar cada uno de ellos y presentar el proceso a la Cámara de Castilla para su revisión, tras lo cual esta preparaba una consulta al rey. De las casi seiscientas consultas sobre residencias de corregidores de Castilla, setenta y cinco resultaron negativas e implicaron penas para los oficiales. La residencia era rutinaria y abierta, y no suponía oprobio; pero si el rey sospechaba alguna irregularidad, podía instituir una investigación más exhaustiva: la visita, llevada en secreto para que el funcionario solo supiese que había sido investigado cuando era acusado. Felipe empleó este procedimiento no solo contra ministros principales como Francisco de Eraso y Antonio Pérez, sino también contra oficiales menores sospechosos de corrupción. En su historia del reinado de Felipe, Cabrera de Córdoba registraba el destino de un ministro de Hacienda «harto suficiente» que «edificaba una casa». Felipe «le hizo visitar con tal rigor que fue condenado a suspensión de oficio en 11.000 ducados, perdiendo su gracia», de modo que, cuando el presidente del Consejo de Hacienda intercedió por él, el rey «le respondió por último: "Haced cuenta que es

muerto este hombre”».[739]

En caso de que estos instrumentos seglares de control resultaran inadecuados, Felipe siempre podía recurrir a la Inquisición. En 1559 permitió al Santo Oficio presentar cargos contra Bartolomé de Carranza, el hombre al que había nombrado regente de España y guardián de su hijo si él fallecía, y durante tres años consintió que los inquisidores interrogaran a sus ministros, a su hermana y aun a él mismo sobre la conducta del fraile *(véase capítulo 7)*. Dos décadas más tarde, los inquisidores interceptaron una carta del vicecanciller de Aragón, don Bernardo de Bolea, que les parecía sospechosa. El rey, preocupado «para asegurar mi conciencia», sugirió que el inquisidor general Quiroga consultase con el confesor real, y los dos recomendaban que don Bernardo hiciera una confesión espontánea a un inquisidor, quien le concedería «la penitencia que le pareciere: todo esto se hará con tanto secreto que ninguna persona lo sabrá». De esta manera, el rey mantenía la dignidad de su oficio, y a la vez recordaba a un oficial eminente que sus pensamientos, así como sus hechos, tenían que ser limpios.[740] Escribía la verdad cuando aseguró a Quiroga que «las cosas del Santo Oficio favoreceré yo y ayudaré siempre, entendiendo como entiendo las causas y obligación que ay para ello, y más en my que en nadie». De manera aún más llamativa, cuando en 1591 la intervención de los inquisidores del tribunal de Zaragoza en un proceso criminal provocó las llamadas Alteraciones de Aragón, el rey declaró que «la principal causa que me ha movido a tomar estos negocios con las veras que se ha visto» era forzar a sus súbditos a «obedecer y respectar al Santo Oficio».[741]

El rey justiciero

«Las cosas del Santo Oficio» fueron los únicos asuntos de justicia en los que Felipe renunció a su autoridad. En todas las

demás materias judiciales insistía en tener la última palabra porque, como en cierta ocasión manifestó Mateo Vázquez, «Vuestra Magestad es la ley viva para mandar». El rey actuó como legislador supremo con frecuencia en cuatro áreas distintas, comenzando por el dominio real. Cuando el conde de Cifuentes construyó un molino de agua en el Tajo aguas arriba de su palacio en Aranjuez, Felipe se quejó de que reducía el caudal disponible para los jardines reales y pidió al conde que lo derribara. Este se negó y, en 1569, el rey llevó a su vasallo ante el tribunal local de Toledo. Dos años más tarde, los jueces fallaron en su favor, pero el conde de Cifuentes apeló inmediatamente a la Cancillería de Valladolid. Esto irritó enormemente al rey, cuyos jardines seguían padeciendo la falta de agua, por lo que escribió una nota apremiante a los jueces:

> Porque esto es cosa nuestra y que toca a nuestra hazienda y patrimonio real, os mandamos que acudiendo a vos sobre este negocio asistáys a él con la diligencia y cuydado que se requiere y de vos confiamos para que se acabe y concluya con la más brevedad que fuere posible; que allende de cumplir en esto con vuestra obligación me terne de vos por servido.[742]

El rey también intervino directamente en otro asunto relacionado con sus dominios en 1569. Un guardia atrapó en el palacio de El Pardo a dos cazadores furtivos con siete conejos. Los furtivos desenvainaron sus espadas, dejaron malherido al guardia y escaparon. Felipe en persona sentenció a los dos cazadores a la pena de muerte (por resistirse al arresto, no por la caza ilegal; «por caza no ay duda sino que no tiene pena de muerte», admitió el rey), y también desterró a las esposas de los furtivos de su pueblo durante dos años, aunque con ciertas reticencias «porque con las mugeres, que por la obligación que tienen a sus maridos en cosas semejantes, se a de tener gran moderación», y además «que la muger no pierda los que fueren suyos por el delicto del marido». Pero estas mujeres habían sido atrapadas mientras cazaban ilegalmente con sus maridos, por lo que también debían pagar. El rey estaba decidido a proteger su

caza y, al igual que otros propietarios de tierras, exigía constantemente una mayor vigilancia, más juicios y penas muy severas.[743]

El rey también intervenía con frecuencia en el sistema legal ejerciendo su prerrogativa de gracia. Así, el Viernes Santo de cada año, su limosnero mayor presentaba a Felipe «muchos procesos de hombres condenados a muerte, a quien ya habían perdonado las partes, para que perdonase él la que tocaba a la justicia, en día de tanta misericordia, para que Dios la tuviese en su alma. Él los perdonó». Lo mismo hacía Felipe para celebrar lo que él consideraba gracias especiales de Dios. Así, tras la victoria de Lepanto y el nacimiento del príncipe don Fernando en 1571, «por esta alegría hizo el rey en estos reynos, y en las Indias, perdón general a todos los culpados que estuuiessen sin parte»; y ocho años después, cuando entró en Portugal como rey, puso en libertad a los prisioneros de cada ciudad por la que pasaba.[744]

En esto, el rey simplemente ejercía la misma prerrogativa de gracia de la que gozaban otros monarcas de la época (y que de hecho sigue existiendo todavía: la Constitución española de 1978 atribuye al monarca el derecho de gracia). Pero Felipe también actuó abiertamente como «ley viva para mandar» en otras dos áreas. Cuando sus jueces detectaban lagunas en la ley, Felipe formulaba normas generales para llenarlas, porque, como una vez escribió, «quando la esperiencia muestra grandes inconvenientes en la exequción de alguna ley, muy bien puede y deve el rey suspenderla y anulalla». En otra ocasión, le recordaba al presidente del Consejo Real de Castilla que «aunque con hazerse justicia se cumple con todo, en el modo de hazerlo, como sabéis, va mucho».[745] Además, en algunos casos, recurría al poder absoluto real para anular la legislación existente. En 1559 firmó un codicilo que invalidaba explícitamente la Ley de las Partidas relativa a la edad a la que,

en caso de su muerte, su hijo y heredero universal podría empezar a gobernar. En el supuesto de que don Carlos siguiera soltero, dejaría de ser menor a la edad de veinte años, como se establecía en las Partidas; pero, de estar «casado y velado» a una edad más joven, entonces Felipe declaraba «como rey y señor que no reconozco superior en lo temporal quiero que çese y no haya lugar» las Partidas. Don Carlos debería empezar a gobernar sus reinos de inmediato.[746] El rey también utilizaba de vez en cuando una fórmula similar para justificar una decisión política cuestionable. En 1557, firmó un poder autorizando a dos de sus ministros para que concluyeran una alianza «de nuestro propio motu, cierta ciencia, y poderío real absoluto, de que en esta parte queremos usar y ussamos como rey y soberano señor, no recognosciente en la tierra superior en lo temporal»; y en 1582 privó a la princesa de Éboli de la «tutoría y curaduría» de sus propios hijos, a pesar de los términos explícitos del testamento de Ruy Gómez, «como rey y soberano señor a quien toca».[747] También emitió centenares de cédulas para rehabilitar a personas —o a sus descendientes— condenadas por el Santo Oficio, normalmente con el consentimiento de la Suprema. Por ejemplo, en 1589, Joan Sánchez, barbero, hijo de padre «condemnado por el delicto de la heregía» por los inquisidores de Murcia, representaba al rey que todavía quedaba «inhábil para pretender offiçios públicos y de honrra en estos nuestros reynos», y pedía dispensación para el «exercicio de jurisdicción criminal». El rey consultó «nuestro consejo de la General Inquisición [que] tuvelo por bien», y después firmó una cédula que, «de mi propio motu y çierta çiençia y poderío real absoluto de que en esta parte puedo usar y uso», daba «licencia y facultad» para «exercer» cualquier oficio público «no embargante qualquier leyes y pragmáticas que en contrario desto aya».[748]

Sin embargo, por lo general, Felipe no veía necesidad de

explicar los motivos por los que se debía obedecer a sus mandatos, y actuaba como *legibus solutus* —exento de respetar sus mismas leyes— siempre que le parecía necesario, incluso en asuntos de vida y muerte, como pudo verse en los casos de Montigny *(véase capítulo 8)*, Escobedo *(véase capítulo 14)*, Orange *(véase capítulo 17)* y otros. Pero esta postura tenía otra cara: a algunos enemigos de Felipe les interesaba acabar con su vida por métodos ajenos a la ley. La primera tentativa conocida tuvo lugar en Londres en 1556, cuando un grupo de conspiradores planeó apuñalarle a él y a la reina María durante un juego de cañas. En 1580, mientras Felipe se encontraba en Badajoz, «una doncella portuguesa andaba para hablar al rey, y interrogada por sus guardas que deseaba, decía que andaba a demandar justicia, y por eso le dejaron pasar», pero, cuando se aproximaba al rey, «uno le alzó la manga, y se descubrió que era armada de una daga y después, mirando más a menudo, se veía que tenía un puñal al lado». Poco más tarde, estando en Lisboa, otra «doncella» trajo a Felipe un papelito donde le avisaba de que sus enemigos estaban enterrando una mina para que explotara bajo la iglesia a la que solía acudir a rezar: el rey envió inmediatamente a unos cortesanos a investigar, y estos la encontraron. En 1586, Felipe «concedió una audiencia a una mujer portuguesa y fue posteriormente informado de que ella y otros compañeros eran espías del prior de Crato don Antonio y habían planeado apuñalar al rey con una afilada daga que llevaba escondida en su cayado de peregrina».[749]

El rey constituía un blanco fácil. El duque de Alba le decía a menudo «que le parecía descuido venirse Su Magestad» a San Lorenzo «tan solo y sin guarda, estando tan de asiento en este desierto los veranos». El asesinato de Escobedo trajo inmediatamente a la memoria de un cortesano que, en 1492, «al rey don Hernando, visabuelo de Su Magestad, en Barcelona le dio un ombre una cuchillada»; y recordó haber visto

recientemente a Felipe «en el patio desta casa [El Escorial] tan solo y tan desnudo de todo lo que suele y puede ser parte para poner temor y respecto en un ánimo mal intencionado y deliberado».[750] Pero Felipe nunca mostraba miedo. Aunque (como afirmaban quienes lo criticaban) normalmente trataba de mantener una actitud discreta, cuando hacía una visita oficial entraba en cualquier pueblo o ciudad montado en su caballo, solo en medio de una gran multitud; y en 1598, durante un sermón fúnebre por él, se recordaba a los dolientes: «Es la confiança hija del amor. No huuo en el mundo rey tan fiado de los suyos, como el nuestro lo fue». Por eso, «seguro y confiado, dormía a par de unas ventanas bajas de vidrio junto a la calle. Salíase por esos campos solo, sin guarda, y daba audiencias, desarmado y solo».[751] El rey se unió en varias ocasiones a sus súbditos en sus devociones. Durante sus viajes, asistía a misa cada día en una iglesia o convento de la localidad; y el Miércoles de Ceniza de 1585, mientras caminaba por las calles de Zaragoza, se encontró con una procesión religiosa que venía del otro lado y, apartando a la multitud, cayó de rodillas con la cabeza descubierta y permaneció allí, rodeado de sus súbditos en respetuoso silencio, hasta que el sacramento hubo pasado. En 1592, durante su último gran viaje a Valladolid, Felipe se sentó con sus hijos entre los estudiantes para asistir a las lecciones públicas que se celebraban en la universidad.

Los dos cuerpos del rey

En Felipe habitaban dos personas: el rey y el hombre. Al parecer, Felipe solo salió una vez «vestido de brocado, con su cetro en la mano» —el día de su juramento como monarca de Portugal [véase lámina 37]—, pero fácilmente demostraba su elevada condición de monarca a través de sus propios hechos y palabras. Cuando en 1570 visitó la catedral de Córdoba y se encontró con el cuerpo embalsamado de su antepasado Alfonso VIII,

muerto en 1214, «tuvo la gorra quitada en tanto que estuvieron las caxas abiertas, no solo con acato sino con reverencia», y cuando notó que la figura carecía del estoque que antes sujetaba, «dio su estoque para que se le pusiesse, diziendo no era razón ponerle al rey, su señor, estoque que no era de rey». Tres años más tarde, al enterarse de que en Perú sus representantes habían empezado a entrar «en los pueblos con guion y palio», comentó enojado: «Estas son cosas, insignias y ceremoniales reales, de que no ha de vsar sino la persona real, y no gouernadores». El virrey tuvo que desistir y «ansí lo ordenaréys de aquí adelante, sin dar lugar a lo contrario».[752] Felipe también tenía cuidado de usar el «nos» real en leyes y pragmáticas «que son cosas perpetuas, y que se han de hazer guardar por los señores reyes que succedieren», en las cuales «siempre assí se ha vsado hablar por "nos", especialmente en dezir "ordenamos y mandamos", porque no solo se habla en general con muchos, pero tanbién en nombre de los successores que lo han de mandar guardar».[753]

De ordinario, sin embargo, Felipe prefería la «dignidad a través de la sobriedad» que aconsejaba el influyente libro de Baltasar Castiglione, *El cortesano*: así, en el apogeo de su poder, es como aparece en el retrato de Estado de 1587, pintado cuando tenía sesenta años de edad [véase lámina 40]. Aunque llevaba un traje nuevo cada mes, la hechura y el color —negro— siempre eran los mismos. En algunas ocasiones, el rey vestía ropa aún más cómoda. En 1559, el embajador inglés dijo que, durante su audiencia, Felipe apareció «ataviado con una capa negra y un gorro de paño». Seis años más tarde, según su colega portugués, «el rey se viste de unas ropas de colores para el camino» y «estas ropas mandan hacerse en Segovia». En 1584, en San Lorenzo, uno de los monjes comentó que cuando el rey asistía a los oficios, «tenía ropa y gorra, que parecía puro médico; tampoco tenía espada». Al año siguiente, cuando salió

para recibir a su futuro yerno, el duque de Saboya, el rey iba «vestido de negro sin pompa alguna» e incluso durante el «desposorio de su hija», aunque todos los demás iban lujosamente vestidos, «el rey iba muy llano, de vestido negro común con los ciudadanos».[754]

No obstante, incluso cuando «iba muy llano», Felipe tenía la capacidad de intimidar a todos los que se topaban con él. Cuando compareció en su presencia, Teresa de Ávila hallaba que «toda turbada, empecé a hablarle, porque su mirar penetrante, desos que ahondan hasta el ánima, fijo en mí, parecía herirme, así que bajé mi vista y con toda brevedad le dije mis deseos». Antes de cada audiencia, el embajador veneciano Leonardo Donà pasó muchas horas «leyendo y releyendo más de diez veces» las cartas e instrucciones que había recibido, por si Felipe le hacía alguna pregunta. En su sermón fúnebre, el predicador Aguilar de Terrones señaló que «con un mirar torcido, metió algunos en las sepulturas» y preguntó: «¿Quantos grandes letrados, quantos valerosos capitanes […] en viendo a Su Magestad se turbaron, temblaron y enmudecieron?».[755]

Era en parte una fachada. El rey demostraba su preocupación por «acertar», uno de los términos más frecuentes en su vocabulario profesional (lo que tal vez señalaba una falta de confianza en sí mismo). En 1559, mientras se preparaba para viajar al norte de Europa, Felipe exclamó que «yo no deseo ni tengo otro fin sino de azertar; plega a Dios que así se haga como yo lo deseo, mas estoy muy pudrido que tras desear yo esto tanto se yerre muchas vezes. Que está el mundo desta manera». Y continuó obsesionado después de su vuelta a España. Le aseguró a Quiroga que «en todo deseo acertar, y más en las cosas que tocan a religión»; «para que se acierte lo que más convenga a su servicio y religión que es lo que yo pretendo y deseo»; «yo deseo tanto acertar en la provisión de

presidente [de Castilla]»; y «yo no dexaré de ir pensando en todo para procurar se acierte mejor», cuatro ejemplos tomados de su correspondencia con un solo ministro, y en un solo año, 1576. Su ansiedad no amainó con el tiempo. En 1592 agradecía a la Suprema «por el gran cuydado con que se trata lo que tanto conviene al servicio de Dios y al mýo, y a la authoridad de el Santo Oficio (que no se puede dividir lo uno de lo otro) y para que mejor se acierte en esto»; en tanto que dos años más tarde anunció que [en] «lo que toca a la provisión de inquisidor general, días ha que yo ando pensando en ello con mucho deseo de acertar».[756]

La sobrecarga de información y el camino hacia el desastre

La ansiedad del rey por acertar subyacía a su insistencia en tomar todas las decisiones importantes él mismo, y dio lugar a un sistema de gobierno comparable a un «panóptico», en el que solo la persona situada en el centro podía verlo todo. Aunque el atractivo de este tipo de centralización para el rey era evidente, también lo eran sus peligros. Los gobernantes, al igual que los líderes de cualquier organización empresarial, deben contar con dos cualidades clave: una visión clara y la capacidad de delegar. Su principal tarea consiste en definir unos objetivos claros para su empresa, desarrollar un plan para conseguirlos y controlar sistemáticamente el progreso conforme al plan, ajustándolo a las circunstancias según sea necesario. Deben formular «preguntas abiertas» —qué, cuándo y por qué— y visualizar cómo tendría que evolucionar la empresa en los años siguientes. Pero, además, han de elegir y formar a unos subordinados capaces de alcanzar esos objetivos y, a continuación, delegar en ellos la ejecución. Las normas de actuación y su puesta en práctica tienen que mantenerse completamente aparte. Las mismas personas no deberían encargarse nunca de las políticas y

las operaciones: los líderes establecen las metas y dan instrucciones; los gerentes las llevan a cabo y fomentan la eficacia.

Según la moderna teoría organizacional, el sistema empresarial menos eficaz es aquel en que el líder trata de hacerlo todo de una forma dictatorial y hermética y reduce a los empleados de todos los niveles a meros funcionarios, de modo que, bajo la sobrecarga de responsabilidad, limita los objetivos de la empresa para hacer frente a cada reto que se presenta y tratar de evitar los errores. Este era el estilo de liderazgo adoptado por Felipe. Antes de dar su aprobación definitiva a cualquier acción, esperaba a que todo pareciera estar en perfecto orden. En 1571, mientras el embajador veneciano en Madrid esperaba impaciente a que las galeras españolas se hicieran al mar para unirse a la Armada de la Liga *(véase capítulo 11)*, comentó con irritado asombro la insistencia del rey por tenerlo todo absolutamente dispuesto antes de permitir el inicio de la campaña:

> Veo que, en lo que respecta a la guerra naval, cualquier mínimo detalle se lleva muchísimo tiempo e impide los viajes; el hecho de no estar listos los remos o las velas, o no tener bastantes hornos para hacer galletas, o carecer de solo diez árboles o mástiles, retrasa durante meses enteros la salida de la flota.

Por otro lado, una vez que se había reunido hasta el último remo, vela, horno y mástil, el rey esperaba que todo fuese como un reloj.[757] Esta esperanza era, por supuesto, totalmente vana dadas las limitaciones impuestas por la tecnología del siglo XVI, aunque tres factores impedían que Felipe pudiese ver este defecto crítico. En primer lugar, el rey mantenía el mayor y mejor servicio de información de su tiempo. Un enviado flamenco en la corte en 1566 advertía a su amo: «Vuestra Señoría sabe que no passa allá cosa que luego no se sepa aquí»; mientras que, ocho años más tarde, un agudo embajador veneciano opinaba que la «inteligencia» a la disposición del rey

«es tanta, que no hay cosa que no sabe y que no vee».[758] Felipe mantenía embajadas permanentes en Roma, Venecia, Francia, Génova, el Imperio, los cantones suizos y Turín (y también en Lisboa hasta 1580, y en Londres hasta 1584), así como enviados especiales cada vez que la ocasión lo requería. Mientras que los embajadores y ministros de la mayoría de los restantes Estados europeos solían enviar un despacho a sus superiores cada mes, Felipe esperaba recibir al menos uno semanal, si no más a menudo. En 1557, cuando entendía que un ejército francés se acercaba al campo sobre San Quintín, le escribió a su primo, Manuel Filiberto, de su puño y letra: «Me aviséis bolando dello con tres o cuatro, cada uno por su parte, que hagan grandísima diligencia […]. Y para esto os ruego mucho que de noche y de día hagáis tener caballos sueltos». Seis años más tarde, enfatizó a su enviado en el Concilio de Trento que deseaba saber todo, «porque juzgamos que no habría de haber cosa tan grande ni pequeña que en ese concilio se hiciese, que no fue con saberla vos y tenerla entendida, aun cuando pensase». Durante la invasión de Portugal en 1580, el rey avisó al duque de Alba de que «holgaré mucho que cada día me aviséis de lo que hubiere», y a partir de entonces empezó a recibir puntualmente dos, tres e incluso cuatro cartas al día (aparte de las que se dirigían a los principales ministros de la corte). Ocho años después, durante la campaña de la Armada, el rey mostró una impaciencia todavía mayor y ordenó a sus representantes que proporcionaran un flujo constante de noticias «pues agora es el tiempo de avisarme de todo por momentos».[759]

Los ministros de Felipe le obedecían. El rey informó al duque de Alba, durante la invasión de Portugal en 1580, de que «holgaré mucho que cada día me aviséis de lo que hubiere», y el duque tuvo que enviar dos, tres y hasta cuatro cartas diarias; al mismo tiempo, sus embajadores y sus espías

averiguaban, y le transmitían, casi todos los secretos de Europa. En la década de 1560, sus representantes, tanto en Londres o en París, se las arreglaron para obtener y copiar un mapa de los asentamientos franceses en La Florida, que sirvió de gran ayuda en la posterior campaña para destruirlos *(véase capítulo 7)*. En 1578, su embajador en Inglaterra sobornó a «una persona que embiava […] en la nave que Omfre Gilbert [sir Humphrey Gilbert] llevava a las Indias arribas»; y este agente desconocido proporcionó una valiosa información secreta sobre los intentos de Inglaterra por descubrir el Paso del Noroeste.[760] En la década de 1580, tanto el cifrador de los breves papales como el embajador inglés en París y el contador de la Casa de la reina Isabel (por nombrar solo a los más destacados) aceptaron dinero de los diplomáticos de Felipe a cambio de traicionar secretos.

La eficacia de los archiveros de Felipe en recuperar y almacenar la información formaba el segundo elemento que sostenía la falsa ilusión de que los datos a disposición del rey le capacitaban para «acertar» en cualquier decisión. El rey mantenía numerosos depósitos: uno en Barcelona para los documentos relacionados con la Corona de Aragón, otro en Nápoles para las escrituras de propiedad del virreinato, otro en la iglesia de Santiago en Roma para los informes y bulas papales a su favor, y otro en el Archivo General de Simancas para los documentos de la Corona de Castilla y el gobierno central. Además, en Portugal visitó el Archivo Nacional de la Torre do Tombo, ya constituido como «memorial universal», e incorporó muchas de sus prácticas en su *Instrucción para el gobierno del Archivo de Simancas* en 1588. Estos eran ya archivos en funcionamiento. Entre 1583 y 1593 el archivero real, Diego de Ayala, recibió casi trescientas solicitudes de copias de documentos conservados en Simancas, de las que el propio Felipe envió treinta y cinco peticiones. Una de ellas era

la solicitud de un documento que demostraba que la corona tenía el derecho de nombrar a todos los deanes en el reino de Granada. Su archivero encontró una bula de 1493 que le daba la razón, y Felipe envió, con aires de suficiencia, una copia a su embajador en Roma. En 1586, cuando llegaron a Madrid noticias del saco de Cartagena de Indias por sir Francis Drake, el Consejo de Indias quiso «traer del archivo de Simancas al Consejo las informaciones que se hizieron sobre la toma y robo de Cartagena que se hizo por ciertos franceses, que están en el archivo en el caxón 41, arca 13».[761] [⇒]

El último elemento que indujo a Felipe a creer en su omnisciencia fue el magnífico servicio de correos que tenía a su disposición. El contrato firmado por su padre con la familia Thurn und Taxis estableció una cadena de estaciones postales que unían España con Alemania, Italia y los Países Bajos; cada semana, decenas de mensajes oficiales recorrían sin problemas esas cadenas. Esta red podía expandirse siempre que fuera necesario. La mayoría de las cartas de todas las rutas postales salían con el correo «ordinario» que partía de cada ciudad importante una o dos veces al mes, pero también se recurría a correos «extraordinarios» cuando se requerían. Como observó Giovanni Ugolini, en la época de Felipe una carta podía viajar más rápido que cualquier otra cosa.[762] En 1566, cuando estalló la rebelión en los Países Bajos, algunos mensajeros consiguieron transportar los mensajes entre Bruselas y la corte española en once, diez y, en un caso, solo nueve días (lo que supone una media de 150 kilómetros a caballo cada día). Cinco años más tarde, la noticia de la victoria de Lepanto viajó una distancia de 3.500 kilómetros en algo menos de veinticuatro días (de nuevo a una velocidad media de 150 kilómetros diarios); un barco que portaba noticias de la tentativa francesa de capturar Amberes en 1583 llegó a Lisboa en ocho días; otro con información de los preparativos de Parma para la invasión de Inglaterra en 1588

arribó en solo cinco.

La excelente red de información creada por Felipe conseguía que, a menudo, los embajadores extranjeros en la corte española estuvieran en desventaja porque el rey conocía el devenir de los acontecimientos antes que ellos. El 15 de octubre de 1569, por ejemplo, Felipe convocó al embajador francés Fourquevaux a una audiencia y le anunció, «con una sonrisa en la cara», que el ejército de su amo había obtenido una importante victoria sobre los protestantes en Moncontour, cerca de Poitiers: un mensajero especial de su agente en Lyon acababa de llegar con la noticia. La confirmación de la misma llegó el día 21 con un correo urgente enviado por el embajador español en Francia, mientras que Fourquevaux solo fue informado por su propio gobierno unos días después.[763] El rey llegó incluso a avergonzar a los embajadores de la República de Venecia, cuyo servicio de información fue la envidia de toda Europa. El 6 de junio de 1571, un mensajero real procedente de Roma trajo la noticia de que los representantes de España, Venecia y el papa habían formado una Liga para acabar con los turcos otomanos dieciocho días antes; un correo papal llegó con la confirmación el día 10; pero el embajador de Venecia, Leonardo Donà, no recibió la noticia de su propio gobierno hasta el día 28. Ese mismo año, aunque Donà fue el primer embajador que recibió un informe completo sobre la victoria de Lepanto, cuando intentó comunicar la noticia al rey descubrió que Felipe ya había sido avisado media hora antes.

Pero el sistema no funcionó siempre así. Como Felipe rezongaba en una ocasión, «los correos corren de manera o duermen».[764] Por ejemplo, de las treinta y dos cartas procedentes de Madrid recibidas por el embajador español en París durante 1578, la más rápida tardó solo siete días; la mitad del total, entre diez y catorce días; y una de ellas cuarenta y nueve días —lo que supone un rango de entre una y seis

semanas—, y, lamentablemente para Felipe, no existía correlación entre la urgencia del mensaje y la velocidad de su llegada. En 1558, la noticia de la muerte de Carlos V en Yuste el 21 de septiembre no le llegó a Felipe en los Países Bajos hasta el 1 de diciembre; la de la muerte de su esposa María en Londres el 17 de noviembre no la recibió hasta el 7 de diciembre. Durante la furia iconoclasta de 1566, el gobernador de la distante provincia de Frisia, tratando de conseguir ayuda del gobierno central de Bruselas, descubrió que los «mensajeros a pie iban más rápido»; y, de vez en cuando, la inseguridad crónica de las carreteras del sur de Francia obligó de igual modo al embajador español en París a confiar los despachos a viajeros normales que iban a pie, porque era menos probable que les detuvieran y registraran.[765] De manera que el sistema de información y de mando de la Monarquía española marchaba, literalmente, al paso.

Como todos los hombres de Estado, Felipe se asemejaba al capitán de un barco: solo podía mantener el rumbo si su embarcación se desplazaba más rápido que la corriente. A medida que el volumen de información del que disponía aumentaba, las resoluciones se producían inevitablemente más despacio. La insistencia en recopilar cada vez más datos y la ilusión de creer que esto le capacitaba —y le daba derecho— a microgestionar las operaciones en todo su imperio mundial, produjo, paradójicamente, una disminución del control. Al parecer, Felipe fue consciente de ello durante la primera mitad de su reinado. Por una parte, solía transmitir sus órdenes a sus principales lugartenientes en persona o bien utilizando a un mensajero capaz de explicar sus intenciones con todo detalle. Eraso y Ruy Gómez fueron portadores de despachos e instrucciones importantes en la década de 1550. Por otra parte, el rey estaba dispuesto a delegar la decisión definitiva sobre temas operativos clave en los encargados de llevarlos a la

práctica. En 1557, durante el asedio de San Quintín, escribió a Manuel Filiberto de Saboya, comandante de su ejército: «Porque estas cosas no se pueden ordenar de acá puntualmente, porque las occasiones y suçessos las alteran cada ora, os le remitimos para que lo veáys y, tractado y platicado con quien os paresciere, eligáys y pongáis en efecto lo que viéredes ser más útil y neçessario al bien desta empresa». Una década más tarde, envió instrucciones extremadamente detalladas al duque de Alba sobre las medidas que debía tomar en los Países Bajos, pero a continuación añadía una concesión vital: «Yo os remito todo esto, como a quien estará sobre el negocio y tendrá mejor entendidos los inconvenientes o conbenientes que podrá aver en todo». Y, en 1574, concedió a don Luis de Requesens similares libertades: «Esto es lo que occurre, y a lo que yo más me inclino; pero vos, que tenéis el negocio presente, haréis lo que viéredes más convenir a mi servicio, y a la buena dirección de lo que tenéis entre manos».[766]

En 1585, Mateo Vázquez explicó a un colega que en la toma de decisiones debía imitar lo «que se suele dezirse a los embaxadores», a saber, «Vos que estáis a la mira y las manos sobre la obra, veréis y haréis lo que entendiéredes más convenir», aunque la palabra clave era «suele». Ese no era el estilo de Felipe por aquel entonces. En su lugar redactó en Madrid o en El Escorial documentos que explicaban la Empresa de Inglaterra a Santa Cruz y Medina Sidonia en Lisboa y a Parma en Bruselas, y se los envió por correo. Lo que es peor, instaba a sus almirantes y generales a que lo creyesen «como a quien tiene entera noticia del estado en que se hallan al presente las cosas en todas partes»; y cuando estos protestaban diciendo que sus órdenes eran imposibles de ejecutar, el rey les hacía callar, irritado: «No ay que gastar tiempo en consultas y respuestas».[767] Esto era, por supuesto, ridículo. Incluso aunque el rey hubiese tenido «entera noticia

del estado en que se hallan al presente las cosas en todas partes», habría sido de escasa utilidad porque, para cuando sus instrucciones llegaran a su destino, «el estado en que se hallan al presente las cosas» ya habría cambiado.

Felipe nunca llegó a comprender, al parecer, la necesidad de reconocer sus propias limitaciones, sobre todo durante cualquiera de las crisis que multiplicaba enormemente el número de decisiones urgentes que debían tomarse, porque (en palabras de un eminente analista estratégico contemporáneo):

> Un ser humano solo puede absorber y digerir información hasta ciertos límites, y actuar en consecuencia, durante un periodo determinado. A medida que aumenta la tensión, la mayoría de los individuos ignora o tergiversa los datos, confunde y malinterpreta la información, y aumentan la confusión, la desorientación y la sorpresa.

En resumen, «una mayor información procedente de más fuentes, y disponible con mayor rapidez que nunca, conduce a la sobrecarga del sistema». Tanto en el siglo XVI como en el XXI, «las tecnologías de procesamiento y transmisión superan con creces nuestra capacidad de asimilar, clasificar y distribuir información».[768] Incluso aunque, como don Juan de Silva especuló irreverentemente en 1589, «la cabeça de su Magestad […] deue ser la mayor del mundo», resultaba demasiado pequeña para microgestionar un imperio en el que nunca se ponía el sol.

Dinero recibido de Castilla (en ducados)

ño	Para la flota mediterránea	Para el ejército de Flandes
571	793 ,000	119,000
572	1,463 ,000	1,776,000
573	1, 102,000	1,813,000
574	1,252,000	3,737,000
575	711,000	2,518,000
576	1,069,000	872,000
577	673 ,000	857,000
otal	7,063,000	11,692,000

El coste de la guerra en dos frentes, 1571-1577. El coste para España de la derrota de los turcos en Lepanto en 1571 fue relativamente bajo, gracias a las contribuciones de los dominios italianos de Felipe así como de sus aliados, pero la campaña del año siguiente, a pesar de que fue infructuosa, costó el doble. Después de que Venecia firmara la paz por separado con los turcos en 1573, los súbditos de Felipe tuvieron que cargar con casi todo el peso de la defensa del Mediterráneo. Al mismo tiempo, los costes derivados de la represión de la revuelta holandesa se dispararon. Como los ingresos totales de la Corona de Castilla apenas superaban los seis millones de ducados, de los cuales la mitad se invertía en devolver los préstamos solicitados anteriormente, la Real Hacienda incurrió rápidamente en enormes deudas. El 1 de septiembre de 1575 Felipe emitió un decreto de suspensión por el que se bloqueaban todos los pagos.

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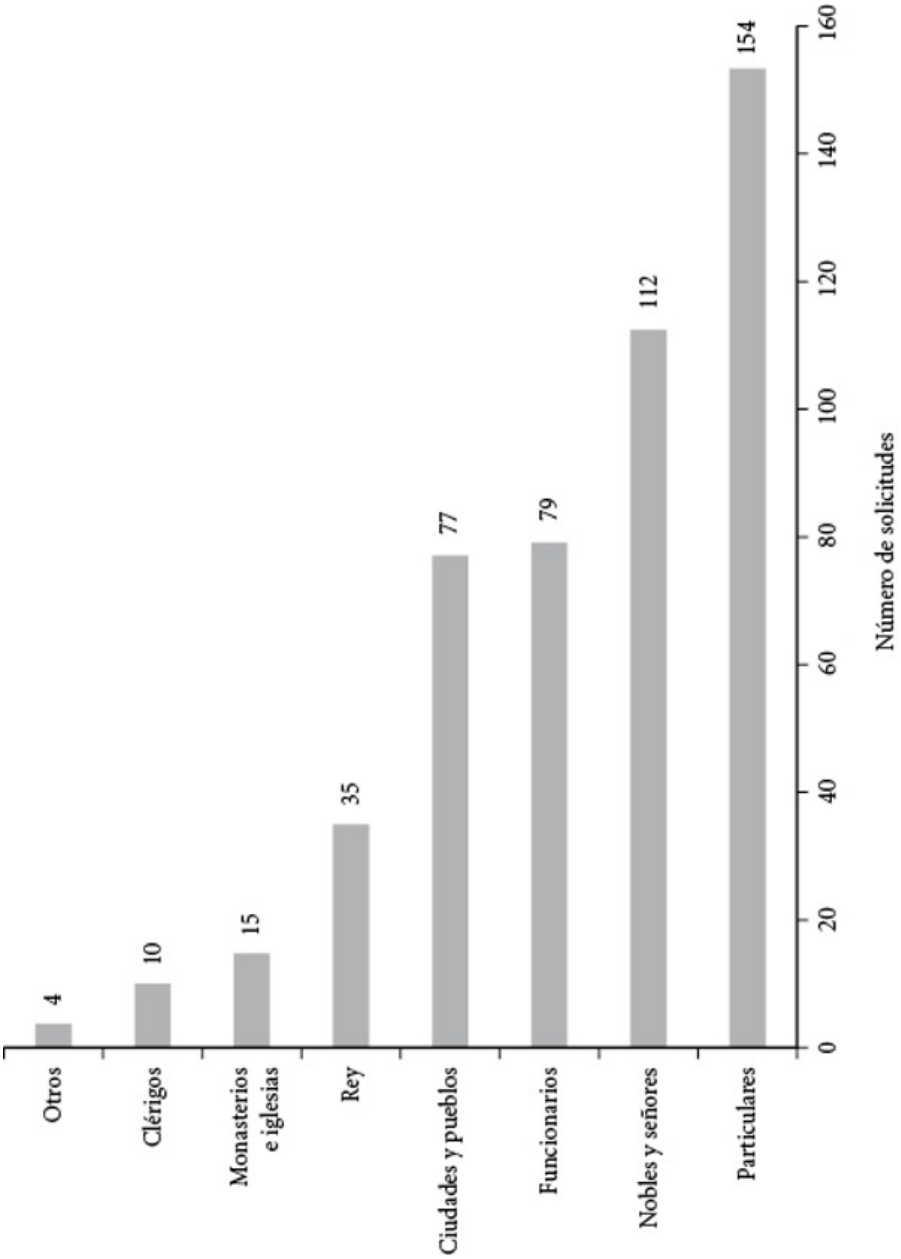

Solicitudes de copias de documentos recibidas por el Archivo de Simancas, 1548-1599. En esa segunda mitad del siglo, el Real Archivo de Simancas recibió peticiones de copias de uno o más documentos referentes —de mayor a menor número— a juros, cartas de naturaleza, legitimaciones, beneficios eclesiásticos, hidalguías, mayorazgos, sueldos atrasados, mercedes y privilegios, y oficios. En torno a un tercio de las solicitudes correspondía a documentos producidos por el Consejo de Castilla, mientras que una quinta parte estaba relacionada con América. La mitad de las peticiones, aproximadamente, llegó en el decenio de 1583-1593.

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QUINTA PARTE
El rey vencido

17. La Empresa de Inglaterra, 1585-1588

España, atacada

Poco después de su elección como papa en abril de 1585, Sixto V mencionó al embajador español en Roma su deseo de encargar «alguna empresa famosa», especificando que podía ser la reconquista del bastión musulmán de Argel o la invasión de Inglaterra. El embajador informó puntualmente de ello a su señor, pero Felipe garabateó sobre la carta con enojo, «¿no les deve parecer famosa lo de Flandes, ni deven pensar lo que se gasta en ella? Poco fundamento tiene lo de Inglaterra».[769]

Durante algún tiempo, Sixto desvió amablemente su atención hacia otras posibilidades, pero en agosto de 1585 volvió a hacer un llamamiento a Felipe para que invadiera Inglaterra. Una vez más, Felipe rechazó la idea. Tras hacer hincapié en el coste y la larga duración de la guerra en los Países Bajos —«todo por no quebrar [yo] un punto en lo de la religión»—, el rey instaba al embajador Olivares a recalcarle al papa el dilema estratégico al que se enfrentaba:

> Encargarme de empresas nuevas, teniendo esta [guerra de Flandes] en el punto en que está, y consumiendo tanta hazienda, juzgue agora Su Santidad si es cosa que yo pueda hazerla […], pues a un tiempo mal se puede acudir gallardamente a más de una parte; y alçar la mano desta por otra ninguna cosa, ya se vee si sería justo ni servicio de Nuestro Señor […] pues es contra herejes, que es lo que el papa dessea. No le parezca que estoy ocioso mientras esto se haze.

Solamente, concedía, «si Dios es servido que se acaba [la guerra de Flandes], como puede esperarse con su favor, entonces auría dispusición para poder en otras partes satisfacer a su santo zelo, y mi desseo»[770].

Las noticias de que sir Francis Drake y su fuerza expedicionaria inglesa habían saqueado Galicia *(véase capítulo 15)* hicieron que el rey cambiara de opinión; en octubre de

1585 el embajador imperial en Madrid afirmó: «Con este acto, los ingleses se han quitado la máscara respecto a España». Aunque al principio el rey se encontró impotente —«veis que ha sido el casso tan sin pensar que de acá no puede proveerse ningún remedio», se quejaba a sus oficiales de Galicia—, la cuestión ahora no era si contraatacar o no, sino cómo se llevaría a cabo el contraataque. Felipe encargó a don Juan de Zúñiga que preparara una revisión exhaustiva de las prioridades de España en materia de seguridad a la luz del ataque de Drake.[771]

El análisis de Zúñiga representaba lo mejor del estilo estratégico de España. Al comienzo, identificaba cuatro principales enemigos —los turcos, los franceses, los holandeses y los ingleses—, y argumentaba que los turcos, pese a haber sido anteriormente los antagonistas más importantes, habían invertido tantos recursos en su lucha contra Persia que bastaba con que Felipe mantuviera una postura defensiva en el Mediterráneo. Por su parte, los franceses, que también antaño constituyeron una grave amenaza, parecían en aquel momento tan enredados en sus propias disputas civiles que, aunque en algún momento pudiera ser necesario intervenir para prolongarlas, probablemente el coste para Felipe no sería muy alto. Quedaban solo los holandeses y los ingleses. Los primeros habían sido para España como una piedra en el zapato desde la rebelión de 1572, dado que cada éxito español parecía ir seguido de algún revés para compensarlo; pero al menos este problema, si bien costoso y humillante, solo se circunscribía a los Países Bajos. La amenaza inglesa era muy distinta: había surgido en fecha reciente y afectaba a todo el mundo hispano, dado que Isabel apoyaba abiertamente a los holandeses y al pretendiente portugués don Antonio, y también a Drake. Zúñiga sostenía que ahora Inglaterra había roto la paz con España y que «estar en esta guerra solo a la defensa es obligarse Su Magestad a un gasto grandíssimo y perpetuo, pues ha de

guardar todas las Indias y la carrera de las occidentales y orientales, lo qual no se puede hazer sino con muchas Armadas». Una invasión anfibia de una fuerza aplastante, razonaba, representaba por tanto la forma más efectiva de defensa, y también la más barata. El desvío inmediato de recursos para la Empresa de Inglaterra podría detener al menos durante un tiempo la reconquista de los Países Bajos y tal vez comprometer la seguridad de la América hispana; pero Zúñiga opinaba que había que asumir el riesgo, porque, mientras Inglaterra continuara con las hostilidades, ninguna parte de la monarquía de Felipe estaría a salvo.[772]

Los hechos pronto le dieron la razón. Tropas inglesas pagadas por Isabel Tudor llegaron a Holanda, lideradas por el conde de Leicester, privado de la reina, para actuar como gobernador general de las provincias rebeldes. Además, a España no dejaban de llegar noticias de los destructivos avances de Drake en las islas Canarias, en las de Cabo Verde y, por último, en el Caribe. En Madrid, Granvela lamentaba que «la reina de Inglaterra nos haga la guerra de forma tan descarada y deshonesta, y que nosotros no podamos vengarnos»; mientras que en Lisboa el marqués de Santa Cruz redactó un *Discurso* en el que repasaba las medidas defensivas esenciales para protegerse contra la posibilidad de más ataques de Drake.[773] En cambio, el arzobispo de Sevilla, don Rodrigo de Castro, que había trabajado con el rey en la recatolización de Inglaterra en la década de 1550, fue duramente criticado por su cobardía y sus respuestas pusilánimes. ¿Qué sentido tenía perseguir a Drake?, preguntaba, ¿porque era gran marinero e iba bien pertrechado de todo lo necesario? Sin duda, la mejor manera de acabar con la amenaza inglesa era atacar Inglaterra mientras su más destacado almirante estaba lejos de sus aguas. «Si la jornada se huviesse de hazer», fulminó, «nunca pudo haver mejor ocasión». El rey se mostró de acuerdo: «Como havréis visto, y

veréis agora», escribió en la cubierta de la carta de Castro, «está en esto dado la orden que ha parecido convenir».[774]

Y, en efecto, así fue: el 24 de octubre de 1585, dos semanas después de que las fuerzas de Drake desembarcaran en Galicia, Felipe firmó unas cartas informando a Sixto de que aceptaba con entusiasmo su invitación a acometer la conquista de Inglaterra. El rey hacía solo dos llamadas a la cautela: primero, «que por más que Su Sanctidad y Su Magestad concurran a esta empresa de voluntades, la misma brevedad del tiempo (pidiendo el effecto del negocio tan grandes preparaciones) excluye el poderse hazer el año de 86, y así aurá de quedar para el de 87». Y, segundo, que dado que el coste total de la empresa probablemente superaría los tres millones de ducados, en un momento en que la guerra en los Países Bajos ya tenía las finanzas españolas al límite, «por no faltar en nada se contenta de poner lo que pudiere, declarando que no podrá ser más de la tercia parte del gasto, o a lo summo la mitad, y que lo demás se ha de proveer allá [en Roma]».[775] Una vez que Felipe recibió, en diciembre de 1585, la confirmación del apoyo de Sixto a este respecto, se comprometió a llevar a cabo la conquista de Inglaterra e invitó al príncipe de Parma, orgulloso de su triunfante reconquista de la mayor parte de Flandes y Brabante, a diseñar una estrategia adecuada para la invasión.

«La traza acordada»

El rey sabía, tanto de sus lecciones de historia como de su experiencia como consorte de María Tudor, que las invasiones por mar habían derrocado o minado gravemente a nueve gobiernos ingleses a lo largo de los cinco siglos anteriores, y concluyó que tres de las estrategias del pasado ofrecían razonables visos de éxito. La primera consistía en una flota lo bastante fuerte para derrotar a la marina inglesa y capaz de conducir al otro lado del canal de la Mancha a un ejército

suficientemente numeroso para llevar a cabo la conquista, como Guillermo I había hecho en 1066 con un éxito espectacular. Otra estrategia incluía un asalto por sorpresa, como el que Enrique VII, abuelo de Isabel, había realizado en 1485. Por último, se podía reunir en secreto un ejército cerca del canal mientras, para desviar la atención, se lanzaba un ataque sobre Irlanda que arrastraría hacia allí a la mayoría de las fuerzas inglesas, dejando a Inglaterra relativamente desprotegida frente a la invasión por parte del contingente principal, como más adelante intentaría Napoleón. El hecho de que todas estas posibilidades fueran tenidas en cuenta en 1586-1588 acredita la visión y la competencia de Felipe y sus ministros; que el rey finalmente tratara de acometer las tres a la vez, no.

La confusión comenzó en febrero de 1586, cuando el marqués de Santa Cruz envió al rey un elocuente alegato acerca de que la mejor manera de defender la península sería atacar Inglaterra con una fuerza anfibia bajo su mando. Felipe recibió con agrado la sugerencia y ordenó al marqués que preparara y enviara «un papel del modo con que le parece que aquello se podría ejecutar, dando lugar a ello las cosas».[776] Santa Cruz cumplió en marzo de 1586 con una propuesta titulada *El Armada y Ejército que pareció se havía de juntar para la conquista de Inglaterra*. Aunque el marqués jamás trasladó al papel ni la estrategia ni el objetivo concretos que contemplaba, porque «el negocio es tal que no se puede del todo tratar ni conferir por escrito», es posible deducir sus intenciones a través de la extraordinaria cantidad y la naturaleza del material especificado: 510 barcos que debían transportar 55.000 efectivos de infantería y 1.600 de caballería, con todo el equipamiento, munición y artillería. Era la estrategia de Guillermo el Conquistador: una invasión con unas fuerzas abrumadoras.

Antes de que pudiera comenzar con sus preparativos, llegaron noticias de que Drake había capturado y saqueado

Santo Domingo, la capital del Caribe español. El rey ordenó entonces que Santa Cruz se olvidara de «la otra plática movida» (la invasión de Inglaterra) y se dedicara a perseguir y destruir a Drake. El marqués debía partir de inmediato con todas las naves de guerra disponibles hacia el Caribe; «en la brevedad de vuestra salida consiste todo lo que se pretende», insistía Felipe en una carta fechada el 20 de abril de 1586.[777]

Aquel mismo día, en Bruselas, el duque de Parma completó y envió su propio y detallado plan para invadir Inglaterra, como el rey le había solicitado. El documento, de veintiocho páginas, comenzaba lamentando el poco secreto que rodeaba las intenciones del rey, afirmando que incluso soldados de a pie y civiles de los Países Bajos debatían abiertamente sobre la mejor forma de invadir Inglaterra. No obstante, el príncipe pensaba que el éxito todavía podía garantizarse si se mantenían tres premisas básicas. La primera, que Felipe debía ser el único responsable, «no haziendo caso de los propios del payś [Inglaterra] ni de la assistencia de otros coligados». La segunda, que debía impedirse que los franceses interfirieran, ya fuera a través del envío de ayuda a Isabel o de su intervención en los Países Bajos. Y, la tercera, que debían quedar suficientes tropas para defender las provincias de los Países Bajos recientemente recuperadas, una vez la fuerza de asalto hubiera partido. Parma se ofreció a conducir un contingente de treinta mil soldados de infantería y quinientos de caballería desde Flandes a través del canal a bordo de una flotilla de barcazas y lanzar un ataque sorpresa sobre Inglaterra. Siempre que sus intenciones concretas se mantuvieran en secreto, «con la comodidad que aquí ay y facilidad de juntar la gente de guerra y embarcalla en los navíos que se dize, y pudiéndose con brevedad cada momento saber las fuerzas que la dicha reyna tiene, y pudiere tener en mar y tierra, siendo un pasaje de 10 u 12 horas quando no aya viento y 8 quando le aya», el príncipe se mostraba seguro de que la

invasión podía llevarse a cabo con grandes probabilidades de éxito. «La costa y desembarcadero para ganar tierra parece el más apropósito, breve y fácil desde Dobra [Dover] hasta Margat [Margate], que está a la boca del río Tamesis». Y continuaba: «Es también de grande consideración el poder llegar tan brevemente a la dicha Londres y cogella, por consiguiente, desapercivida». Solo en dos párrafos de la carta se contemplaba la posibilidad de apoyo naval desde España y, aun así, solo en el contexto del «peor escenario posible»: es decir, si Inglaterra llegaba a enterarse de algún modo de los detalles del plan. En tal caso, sugería Parma, dado que las hazañas de Drake habían obligado al rey a enviar una flota para proteger el Atlántico, tal vez esta nueva Armada podría «servir de diversión para traerlos [a los ingleses] fuera de su canal». Esto se correspondía con la tercera estrategia alternativa para invadir Inglaterra, la versión napoleónica: la utilización de un señuelo naval para facilitar el ataque por parte de un ejército de invasión relativamente desprotegido.[778]

Parma confió sus planes a un mensajero especial, a quien (al parecer, en beneficio del secreto) dio instrucciones de seguir el Camino de los Españoles desde Bruselas hasta Génova, embarcar hacia Barcelona y, desde allí, dirigirse a Madrid. Su plan, por tanto, no llegó a la corte hasta finales de junio y, para entonces, las andanzas de Drake habían sembrado la confusión en la capital española. Mateo Vázquez se quejó ante el conde de Barajas, presidente del Consejo Real, de que en Madrid

> se habla muy sueltamente sobre los daños que ha hecho el inglés Francisco Draque y con palabras tan descompuestas y desordenadas, dando a entender que no se ha puesto el remedio que se pudiere, que hazen sospechar se lleva fin a poner mal ánimo a los vassallos, no mirando en la gran prudencia y consideración con que Su Magestad ha attendido y attiende a prevenir todo lo posible.

El conde respondió en términos hábiles (y reveladores):

> Aunque en todas partes ay personas malas y de inquietas intenciones, no creo que

todos los que hablan en este es porque las tengan, sino porque tanbién algunos se mueven con zelo de dessear ver a sus ojos lo que Su Magestad provee en secreto para las cosas de su servicio y bien destos reinos, y que así de mano en mano se va cundiendo esta materia por ser tan pública y de tanta importancia la que públicamente se vee que depende de Inglaterra y del inglés Francisco Draque.

Hizo hincapié en que, «pues esto de los ingleses y de las Indias es tan extraordinario y tan público», el rey debía crear una junta especial para discutir (y dejarse ver haciéndolo) «todas las cossas de estado y guerra y galeras en que entra lo de los ingleses».[779] Pero este «gobierno transparente» no se ajustaba al estilo del rey. En su lugar, envió la propuesta del duque de Parma a don Juan de Zúñiga, que ya servía de coordinador para la empresa propuesta por Santa Cruz.

Zúñiga recomendó una estrategia combinada. Una Armada de 120 galeones, galeazas, galeras, mercantes y pinazas, junto con un ejército de treinta mil soldados de infantería y dos mil de caballería, debía concentrarse en Lisboa y zarpar hacia Irlanda. Al mismo tiempo, el Ejército de Flandes debía reforzarse, primero para contener a las fuerzas holandesas e inglesas en Holanda y, después, para cruzar el canal en pequeñas embarcaciones, preparándose para emprender una marcha sorpresa sobre Londres mientras Isabel enviaba sus fuerzas a destruir la lejana posición de avanzada establecida por la Armada. Puesto que España no obtendría ningún provecho de la anexión directa de Inglaterra («por lo que costaría conservarle»), Zúñiga insistió en que el recién conquistado reino debía dejarse en manos de un soberano católico aliado. Él proponía a María Estuardo, aunque recomendaba que esta debería casarse con un príncipe católico de confianza, como Alejandro Farnesio, duque de Parma.[780]

Estas sugerencias constituían la base del plan que, a partir de entonces, se llamaría (por motivos de seguridad) «la traza acordada», el cual Felipe envió en julio de 1586 tanto a Parma, en Bruselas, como a Santa Cruz, en Lisboa, y, aunque este

documento aún no ha salido a la luz, su contenido se deduce de la correspondencia posterior. El marqués comandaría una Armada desde Lisboa en el verano de 1587 —un año más tarde — llevando con él todas las tropas disponibles así como el pesado equipamiento (especialmente, una poderosa artillería de asedio) necesario para que el ataque sobre Londres se saldara con éxito. Primero, debía conducirla hasta Irlanda, donde actuaría de cabeza de playa para distraer a las fuerzas navales de Isabel y neutralizar su potencial de resistencia, de manera que, pasados unos dos meses, la Armada podría abandonar Irlanda y poner rumbo al canal. Llegado ese momento, y no antes, Parma ordenaría el embarque de la principal fuerza de invasión, compuesta por treinta mil veteranos, en una flotilla de pequeños barcos reunida en secreto en los puertos de Flandes, y cruzaría la costa de Kent mientras la Gran Armada mantenía el control local del mar. Los hombres de Parma, junto con los refuerzos y el tren de asedio de la flota, desembarcarían entonces cerca de Margate, saldrían como una exhalación hacia Londres y lo capturarían, preferiblemente con Isabel y sus ministros todavía allí.

¿Cabe preguntarse si Felipe era consciente de los enormes riesgos inherentes a esta traza híbrida? La propuesta de Santa Cruz tenía mucho mérito: la campaña de 1588 demostró que, una vez que la Armada saliera al mar, los españoles podrían desplazar sesenta mil toneladas de carga desde un extremo del canal al otro, a pesar de los reiterados ataques. Y el exitoso desembarco de tropas españolas en Kinsale en 1601 evidenció lo fácil que era establecer y fortificar una cabeza de playa en el sur de Irlanda. La contrapropuesta de Parma de un desembarco por sorpresa en Kent también ofrecía muchos puntos a su favor: una y otra vez, sus tropas habían demostrado su valor bajo su mando, y las en gran medida desentrenadas fuerzas inglesas, tomadas por sorpresa, quizá no conseguirían repeler al

Ejército de Flandes una vez hubiese tomado tierra. El fracaso de la Empresa de Inglaterra se debió, en última instancia, a la decisión de unir la flota de España con el ejército procedente de los Países Bajos como preludio esencial al lanzamiento de la invasión.

¿Por qué cometió este error crucial? Felipe había participado en dos campañas victoriosas en el comienzo de su reinado *(véase capítulo 3),* y en los primeros años de la década de 1580 había aprobado el audaz traslado de un gran ejército y su equipo de Setúbal a Cascais, una travesía de doscientos kilómetros, y el envío de dos fuerzas anfibias para capturar islas a más de 1.800 kilómetros de la península ibérica *(véase capítulo 15)*. También poseía un conocimiento directo de la ruta que seguirían sus fuerzas de invasión: en 1554 había navegado desde La Coruña a Southampton, un viaje que completó en solo una semana, y en los tres años siguientes cruzó el canal de la Mancha en tres ocasiones. No obstante, Felipe seguía siendo básicamente un estratega de salón: las consideraciones de tipo técnico, táctico y operativo eran para él como un libro cerrado. Además, no hizo caso a las sugerencias de que volviera a Lisboa para supervisar personalmente la congregación de la flota, por lo que Santa Cruz tardó al menos una semana en recibir una respuesta a cada uno de los problemas que le había referido al rey. Parma tenía que esperar al menos un mes, y a veces más. Y lo que era aún más grave, Felipe declinó consultar con sus comandantes como era debido: ambos recibieron la «traza acordada» por correo, con lo cual no podían pedirle a Felipe que explicara con precisión cómo dos fuerzas tan numerosas, con sus bases operativas a una distancia de más de mil kilómetros por mar la una de la otra, podían alcanzar la exactitud necesaria en cuanto a tiempo y lugar para llevar a cabo su confluencia, o cómo las vulnerables y escasamente armadas embarcaciones reunidas en Flandes para el transporte

de las tropas podían escapar de los barcos de guerra holandeses e ingleses situados *ex profeso* a cierta distancia de la costa para interceptarlos y destruirlos. Por último, dado que tanto Zúñiga como el cardenal Granvela, los únicos ministros en Madrid que poseían la autoridad y el conocimiento suficientes para presentar objeciones, murieron en el otoño de 1586, nadie podía insistir en la conveniencia de que Felipe diseñara un plan alternativo.

En lugar de ello, el rey firmó una larga sucesión de órdenes movilizando los recursos de su monarquía para llevar a efecto su «traza acordada». Las autoridades de todos los puertos sometidos a Felipe debían retener los barcos mercantes que consideraran adecuados para el transporte de tropas y municiones y enviarlos a Lisboa; muchos capitanes en España empezaron a reclutar tropas españolas para tripular la Gran Flota; los virreyes de Nápoles y Sicilia debían enviar tropas a través del Camino de los Españoles para reforzar a Parma, y soldados, suministros y barcos a Lisboa para unirse a Santa Cruz.

La Armada toma forma

El enorme coste de los preparativos para la invasión de Inglaterra condujo al rey a economizar en todo lo demás. En 1586 rechazó una propuesta del Consejo de Indias para mejorar las defensas del Caribe a la vista de los estragos causados por Drake. «Nadie sentirá más que yo estos daños, ni desseara tanto el remedio, hauiendo forma de ponerle en obra como se querría», informó al consejo; no obstante, «aquella empresa tiene muchas dificultades y la mayor parte es la falta de dinero con que se ha de echar la quenta, que si no fuesse por esta se podría sperar de allanar fácilmente todo lo demás, con ayuda de Nuestro Señor». Igualmente, suspendió un ataque previsto contra el sultán de Aceh, en Sumatra, explicando que «el gran

número de barcos de todo tipo, tropas, municiones y equipamiento militar» reunido para la Gran Armada «consumía tanto que era imposible de todo punto (por más que lo habían intentado afanosamente)» enviar fuerzas al Índico. Igualmente, vetó la propuesta de construir una fortaleza en Mombasa, en África oriental, e ignoró un llamamiento de los colonos de Filipinas para invadir China: la razón dada en cada caso fue la necesidad de concentrar todos los recursos en lo que sus funcionarios llamaban entonces, en su correspondencia, «la materia principal» o «la Empresa».[781]

El rey también se esforzaba al máximo por debilitar a Isabel y sus aliados. Prohibió todo comercio de Inglaterra a España y Portugal: los productos ingleses que llegaran, incluso en embarcaciones neutrales, serían considerados contrabando. Felipe también aprobó otra conspiración de un grupo de católicos ingleses, encabezados por Anthony Babington, para asesinar a Isabel y reemplazarla por María Estuardo, y prometió «acudirse» a los conspiradores «con la mayor presteza que se puede» de España y de los Países Bajos «en sabiendo que se ha hecho en Inglaterra la principal execución» del complot. Aunque reconocía que la implicación de tantas personas podía poner en riesgo la empresa, seguía mostrándose confiado en que «se sirviere Dios de dar él que se pretende, y quiçá es llegado el tiempo en que Él responda por su causa».[782] De hecho, Isabel estaba al tanto de la conspiración y, en cuanto tuvo suficientes pruebas para incriminar a todos los participantes (incluida María), les hizo arrestar, torturar y ejecutar. María Estuardo fue juzgada y encontrada culpable de alta traición; murió en el cadalso en febrero de 1587.

La implicación de Felipe en el complot de Babington enfureció a Isabel, quien ordenó a Drake que atacase los puertos donde se congregaba la Armada de Felipe y causara todo el daño posible a fin de evitar que sus distintas partes se

uniesen. El 29 de abril, mientras la población de Cádiz asistía a un espectáculo acrobático en la plaza Mayor, Drake entró con una poderosa flota en el puerto, donde capturó o destruyó unas veinticuatro naves, así como suministros y reservas de alimentos almacenados para la Armada. Dado que la Europa del siglo XVI disponía de escasos excedentes de alimentos, resultaba muy difícil o incluso imposible obtener grandes cantidades de ellos a corto plazo. Las provisiones destruidas en Cádiz fueron difíciles de sustituir. Peor aún, tras haber «chamuscado las barbas del rey de España» (según sus propias palabras), Drake estuvo merodeando por el cabo de San Vicente durante un mes, y después abandonó la costa española en dirección a las Azores, donde tenía previsto interceptar la flota que regresaba de América y de la India. Para impedir este desastre, Felipe ordenó a Santa Cruz que saliera de Lisboa hacia las Azores para esperar y asegurar la flota, que transportaba tesoros y mercancías por valor de dieciséis millones de ducados, y, aunque lograron su objetivo, no pudieron regresar a Lisboa antes del 28 de septiembre de 1587.

Este cúmulo de tensiones acabó minando la salud de Felipe. En mayo de 1587, un ayuda de cámara lamentaba que «los ojos de su Magestad están con su corrimiento, y los pies temerosos y la mano convaleciente, y el mundo suspenso». Como se quejaba el secretario del Consejo de Guerra, que trataba de coordinar toda la logística de la Armada en la península, «se gasta mucho tiempo en consultar y su Magestad tarda en responder y assí se pierde lo que no se podrá cobrar».[783] La raíz del problema residía en el empeño de Felipe de supervisar todas las decisiones personalmente, por lo que su enfermedad produjo un vacío en el núcleo del poder que nadie podía llenar; y cuando retomó el control en septiembre, abandonó el plan establecido y firmó instrucciones detalladas en las que ordenaba a Santa Cruz y Parma que siguiesen una estrategia totalmente diferente (que

resultaría fatal).

Felipe mandó entonces al marqués que, cuando regresara de las Azores, «en el nombre de Dios vaya derecho al canal de Inglaterra y suba por él adelante hasta dar fondo en el cabo de Margata, auiendo primero embiado auiso al duque de Parma de cómo se le va acercando». A continuación se planteaba una ambigüedad que resultaría de crucial importancia: «El qual duque (como se le ordena) en viendo assí asegurado el passo, con el Armada puesta sobre el dicho cabo, o andando sobre las bueltas del río de Londres si el tiempo lo sufriere, pasará de presto todo el campo que tiene de navíos chicos de que para solo tránsito aurá abundancia en aquellos puertos». El rey proseguía insistiendo en que, hasta que Parma y sus hombres hubieran realizado su travesía, la Armada «no se divierta a más que asegurarle el paso y romper qualquier Armada enemiga que saliese a estorbarlo».[784] Esto dejaba algunas cuestiones clave sin respuesta, sobre todo la de si la Armada pasaría por los puertos de Flandes para cubrir el embarque del ejército de Parma o si esperaría a que las barcazas encargadas de la invasión zarparan para reunirse con la flota en mar abierto. En el primer caso, ¿cómo sortearían los buques de gran calado de la Armada las aguas poco profundas y los bancos de arena que jalonaban la costa flamenca? Y, en el segundo, ¿cómo podía una flota que navegaba a distancia de la costa proteger las barcazas del peligro de ser bloqueadas por los barcos holandeses o ingleses que las estaban esperando?

El conjunto de instrucciones paralelas enviadas al duque de Parma tampoco arrojaba ninguna luz sobre estos cruciales interrogantes. «He resuelto», anunciaba el rey a su sobrino, «que el marqués de Santa Cruz, en llegando con las flotas al cabo de San Vicente (que se espera será de hora en hora) […] vaya en el nombre de Dios derecho al canal de Inglaterra y suba por el adelante hasta dar fondo en el cabo de Margata». El rey

prometía a Parma que la flota avisaría con antelación cuando se estuviera aproximando y, continuaba, «vos estéys tan apunto que en viendo assí assegurado el passo con el Armada puesta sobre el dicho cabo, o andando sobre las bueltas del Temis [Támesis] si el tiempo le diere lugar, passéys de presto todo el campo en las barcas que ternéys prevenidas». Pero sobre cómo podría recorrer Parma los cruciales sesenta y cinco kilómetros que separaban Dunquerque del «cabo de Margata», el rey no decía ni una sola palabra.[785] Se trataba, como mínimo, de un descuido lamentable.

Ahora que el rey había vuelto a decidirse de nuevo, no toleraría más demoras ni objeciones, ni tan siquiera preguntas. Una vez más, envió sus detalladas e inflexibles instrucciones tanto a Lisboa como a Bruselas por medio de correos en lugar de a través de un mensajero de confianza capaz de informar más detalladamente a sus comandantes sobre el papel que debían desempeñar, responder a sus preguntas y transmitirle a su vez al rey su grado de disposición y su moral. Instaba a Parma a terminar con sus quejas:

> No puedo dexar de acordaros que, fuera de la resolución de la empressa y la elección que hize de vuestra persona (que es lo que salió de mí), todo lo demás que se ha dispuesto en lo de por allá, y los medios y forma della, ha sido pura traza vuestra, de que vos solo soys auctor. Y que para prevenirla y executarla, os he dado en gran abundancia todo lo que se me ha pedido y ha sido menester.

Parma debía proceder a la ejecución del plan sin más preguntas ni demoras.[786] Cuando Santa Cruz regresó a Lisboa con su flota maltrecha por las tormentas, el rey le ordenó también que dejara de quejarse y zarpara hacia Flandes: «No ay que gastar tiempo en consultas y respuestas, sino apresurar la execución y avisarme si podrían ganarse algunos días». A medida que el tiempo pasaba, el rey se lamentaba de que «ver perder una hora […] me lastima lo que no podréys creer. Y así os encargo y mando expresamente que partáys en todo este mes». Del despacho del rey salían casi todos los días cartas para

Lisboa, en tono primero exhortativo, luego persuasivo y finalmente intimidatorio.[787]

El embajador veneciano en la corte consiguió una copia de la comedida refutación de Santa Cruz de una de estas poco realistas diatribas y especulaba sobre por qué el rey se negaba a creer a su más experimentado almirante. Concluía que las razones eran tres, todas ellas ligadas al temperamento y al estilo de gobierno de Felipe. La primera, que era «difícil para él cambiar de planes una vez había tomado una decisión». La segunda, que la absoluta confianza de Felipe «en su buena suerte» le llevaba a asumir que Dios recompensaría sus esfuerzos si él cumplía debidamente con su labor. Y, finalmente, que el conocimiento del rey acerca de los asuntos internacionales le llevaba a considerar las operaciones de cada escenario como parte de un contexto más amplio, lo que aumentaba su ansiedad por actuar antes de que la situación, en ese momento favorable, cambiara.[788]

Aunque Felipe nunca leyó este análisis, no hay duda de que habría estado de acuerdo con él, pero habría añadido una cuarta razón para explicar su exasperación cuando Santa Cruz y Parma no ejecutaban sus órdenes con prontitud: la magnitud del coste. Cada día que la Armada continuara inactiva suponía un coste de treinta mil ducados para la flota y otros quince mil para el ejército de Parma. Los fondos disponibles, incluso para las tareas más básicas de gobierno, estaban tan bajos que Felipe pedía estados de cuentas semanales del dinero que quedaba en el tesoro y decidía en persona a qué obligaciones podía hacer frente y cuáles debían esperar [véase lámina 41]. Incluso tuvo que vender las joyas de su difunta esposa Ana para conseguir fondos, y no dejaba de repetir a sus consejeros que «a la verdad ay mucho que hazer agora en hauer dinero, que importa tanto, que todos havríamos de entender solamente en ello y no en otra cosa ninguna; y por buenos successos que aya, sin dinero no sé

que ha de ser de todo aquello, para que es tanto menester, si Dios no haze milagro».[789]

La extraordinaria falta de coherencia del plan de Felipe tenía confundidos y frustrados no solo a sus ministros, sino también a sus enemigos. En distintos momentos, el rey se había planteado seriamente un desembarco en Escocia; un ataque sorpresa sobre Irlanda o la isla de Wight; un repentino asalto del ejército de Parma a la costa de Kent; y un ataque anfibio desde Lisboa contra Argel o Larache en lugar de Inglaterra. Los diversos embajadores y espías destinados en la corte española detectaban cada propuesta y contrapropuesta, y se la comunicaban puntualmente a sus superiores, creando una cacofonía, un «ruido» de fondo que disfrazaba las verdaderas intenciones del rey. Pocos podían aceptar que el monarca más poderoso de la cristiandad fuera tan indeciso; y menos aún que, después de tanta vacilación, adoptaría la estrategia más obvia de todas, aquella de la que todos llevaban hablando varios meses, y elegiría para el desembarco la zona más evidente, la misma donde romanos, sajones y otros ya habían arribado antes.

La decisión de Felipe también consiguió el aislamiento diplomático de Isabel. La clave de su política fue la parálisis de Francia, donde los representantes de Felipe continuaban pagando los subsidios prometidos al duque de Guisa, quien se comprometió a organizar una rebelión general por parte de la Liga Católica en el momento en que se enteró de la salida de la Armada. Los católicos de París comenzaron a adueñarse de la ciudad en mayo de 1588 y, cuando el rey Enrique III desplegó a sus guardias para mantener el orden, la capital entera reaccionó violentamente, levantando barricadas y obligándole a huir. El Día de las Barricadas convirtió a Guisa en el dueño de París y, poco después, se erigió en «teniente general del reino». En Madrid, el embajador imperial observaba con admiración que

> en este momento, el Rey Católico [Felipe] está a salvo: Francia no puede amenazarle, y los turcos poco pueden hacer; tampoco el rey de Escocia, que está ofendido con la reina Isabel debido a la muerte de su madre [María Estuardo] […]. Al mismo tiempo, España puede estar segura de que los cantones suizos no actuarán en su contra ni permitirá que otros lo hagan, dado que ahora son sus aliados.

En resumen, concluía, ninguna potencia extranjera podía impedir que Felipe llevara a cabo su empresa.[790]

Sin embargo, no dejaban de surgir nuevos obstáculos, entre ellos la mala salud del propio rey. Felipe tenía entonces sesenta años y en las navidades de 1587 cayó enfermo y guardó cama. Durante cuatro semanas, no pudo gobernar su imperio ni su Armada. Pero esas cuatro semanas de convalecencia parece que influyeron de alguna manera en que el rey recuperara su legendaria prudencia, y, a continuación, tomó medidas más racionales para salvar la Armada y la empresa para la que había sido concebida. A fin de conocer el verdadero estado de la flota, envió a Lisboa un emisario especial y, cuando este llegó, el 30 de enero de 1588, se encontró con una situación de caos absoluto. Santa Cruz estaba gravemente enfermo, y a la vez mentalmente trastornado, tratando a duras penas de dirigir los preparativos de la flota desde su lecho. La empresa entera estaba al borde del colapso y el panorama era desastroso. Ninguno de los barcos estaba listo para navegar, los suministros se pudrían y, lo que era más grave por ser a la vez más difícil de remediar, los oficiales estaban desmoralizados y desilusionados. La fuerza de las tropas reunidas en Lisboa descendía a razón de 500 hombres al mes; y casi la mitad de los marineros había perecido o desaparecido. Estaba claro que Santa Cruz no era capaz de asumir el mando.

«La mayor flota jamás vista desde la creación del mundo»

El rey tomó entonces una decisión que retrospectivamente ha

sido muy criticada pero que, en su momento, tenía sentido. Lo que la Armada necesitaba, si es que alguna vez se hacía al mar, no era otro almirante de guerra, sino un hombre decidido y práctico, con las cualidades personales y las capacidades administrativas necesarias para convertir el caos de Lisboa en una sólida fuerza de combate. Este hombre era don Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, séptimo duque de Medina Sidonia.

El currículum de Medina Sidonia para suceder a Santa Cruz era impecable. Sus aptitudes administrativas habían quedado sobradamente demostradas en la supervisión del envío de las flotas que partían cada año de Andalucía hacia América; y en fecha reciente había dirigido con gran eficacia la preparación y el envío de los barcos y suministros reunidos para la Armada en Andalucía. Aunque carecía de experiencia de combate, el duque había comandado un ejército durante la campaña portuguesa de 1580, así como las tropas de relevo que se habían enfrentado en Cádiz a Drake en 1587. Además, el duque conocía los objetivos estratégicos de la Armada al haber pasado varias semanas en la corte debatiendo con los ministros sobre la manera de llevar a cabo la inminente guerra contra Inglaterra. Por último, pero no menos importante, era un grande de Castilla, por lo que ninguno de los oficiales que prestaba servicio en la Armada (varios de los cuales se habían propuesto a Felipe como candidatos a suceder a Santa Cruz) podía sentirse resentido o injustamente tratado por servir a las órdenes del séptimo duque de Medina Sidonia.

El duque se encontraba en su palacio de Sanlúcar cuando recibió sin previo aviso una carta firmada por Felipe el 11 de febrero de 1588 en la que se le comunicaba que, dado que Santa Cruz se encontraba en esos momentos demasiado enfermo para comandar la Armada, el rey deseaba que él se hiciera cargo. Comprensiblemente, y teniendo en cuenta el estado de la Armada en aquellos momentos —y nadie mejor

que el duque sabía lo caótico de la situación—, Medina Sidonia hizo todo lo posible por excusarse. Alegó falta de salud, de recursos económicos y de experiencia. El rey desestimó todas estas excusas achacándolas a una modestia equivocada y se negó a tenerlas en cuenta; pero tal vez habría prestado más atención si hubiese leído una segunda carta escrita por el duque. En ella, Medina Sidonia afirmaba: «Propuse a Vuestra Majestad muchas causas propias de su servicio por do no convenía a él que yo lo hiciese, no por rehusar el trabajo sino por ver que se iba a la empresa de un reino tan grande y tan ayudado de los vecinos; y que, para ello, hera menester mucha más fuerza de la que Vuestra Magestad tenía junta en Lisboa». Es evidente que el duque había llegado a la misma conclusión que Parma y Santa Cruz —es decir, que la Empresa de Inglaterra, tal y como se concebía en ese momento, estaba condenada al fracaso—, pero su convincente argumentación nunca llegó al rey.[791]

Don Juan de Idiáquez y don Cristóbal de Moura, que trabajaban con el rey a diario, manejaban la inmensa cantidad de papeleo generado por la Empresa de Inglaterra, y todo lo que tenía que ver con la Armada pasaba por sus manos. Cuando en el cumplimiento de su tarea abrieron la sincera carta de Medina Sidonia, quedaron espantados. «No nos hemos atrevido a dar quenta a Su Magestad de lo que vuestra señoría agora escrive», le reprendieron, añadiendo: «No nos desconsuele con temores del sucesso del Armada, que en tal causa le dará Dios muy bueno». He aquí otro llamativo ejemplo del «pensamiento grupal» de la corte española: los responsables políticos subestimaban o directamente rechazaban todos los puntos de vista discordantes. Sin embargo, en esta ocasión, esos responsables lanzaban también una clara amenaza. Todo el mundo sabía, recordaban a Medina Sidonia, que el ofrecimiento estaba hecho; rechazarlo le llevaría en aquel momento a ser acusado de ingratitud, egoísmo e incluso

cobardía: «Mire Vuestra Señoría que de aquí cuelga conservar la reputación y opinión que el mundo oy tiene de su valor y prudencia, y que todo esto se aventura con saberse lo que nos escrive (de que nos guardaremos bien) quanto más con passar adelante con tal determinación».[792]

Consternado ante esta combinación de presión moral y crudo chantaje, Medina Sidonia solicitó una audiencia, pero —como de costumbre— Felipe se negó. El nuevo capitán general del mar trató de arrancarle concesiones sustanciales antes de partir de mala gana hacia Lisboa, donde se encontró con una desenfadada carta del rey en la que le aseguraba: «Creed que de tal manera considero la importancia desta jornada, que si yo no fuera menester tanto acá, para acudir a lo que para ella y otras muchas cosas es menester, holgara mucho de hallarme en ella; y lo hiziera con gran confiança que me havía de suceder muy bien».[793]

La reacción del duque a esta opinión del monarca no ha llegado hasta nosotros, pero un destacado oficial de la Armada, Martín de Bertendona, escribió a Felipe agriamente: «Mucho quisiera que Vuestra Magestad se allara presente a estas pláticas, porque ay diferencia grande de tratarles ante Vuestra Magestad, donde no puede dexarse de entender la verdad, a tratarlo acá, donde los que lo entienden y los que no dan parecer, y a bezes el indigno es oído». Pero Bertendona terminaba afirmando serena aunque, sin duda, sarcásticamente: «Pues que Vuestra Magestad lo tiene determinado, es de creer que es boluntad divina».[794]

No obstante, bajo la eficaz y comedida dirección de Medina Sidonia, ayudada por su buena disposición a pedir la opinión de sus subordinados de más experiencia, ocurrió un pequeño milagro. Los barcos que ya se encontraban en Lisboa fueron reparados y a estos se añadieron algunos nuevos, mientras que

los soldados y marineros enfermos recobraron la salud, de modo que, de los 104 barcos y apenas 10.000 efectivos que había en febrero de 1588, se pasó a 130 naves y 19.000 soldados en mayo. Las provisiones y el agua fueron estibadas según un sistema de rotación cuidadosamente diseñado y cada barco recibió un juego impreso de instrucciones de navegación. El 28 de mayo de 1588 el duque de Medina Sidonia condujo su Gran Armada a través del Tajo hacia el mar abierto. Por aquel entonces, Parma había reunido otros 300 barcos pequeños y 30.000 veteranos, que esperaban en Flandes. Las fuerzas de Felipe superaban con mucho a las de sus enemigos.

Tanto el rey como sus ministros tenían absoluta confianza en que la Armada resolvería todos los problemas estratégicos a los que se enfrentaba. En un mensaje dirigido a las Cortes de Castilla en enero de 1588, escrito de su puño y letra, el rey recordaba a los procuradores que «ya todos tenéis entendida la empresa en que me he puesto por el servicio de Dios y augmento de nuestra sancta fe cathólica, y beneficio destos reynos, con ser causa tan común». Un mes después, Idiáquez y Moura aseguraban a Medina Sidonia que «auiéndose reducido todas las guerras y empresas a este», la Empresa de Inglaterra resolvería todos los problemas de España.[795]

A pesar de esta retórica enardecedora, una vez se pasó de la teoría a la práctica, Felipe y sus asesores se mostraron más imprecisos. Sobre todo, las instrucciones redactadas para Medina Sidonia el 1 de abril de 1588 no dejaban claro de qué modo alcanzar los trascendentales objetivos. En parte, el documento repetía las órdenes emitidas para Santa Cruz en el mes de septiembre anterior, en las que se instaba al capitán general a conducir su flota directamente a «la plaza acordada» (casi con toda seguridad el fondeadero de Las Dunas, cerca de Dover), y de allí a «darse la mano» con Parma y su ejército; pero precisamente cómo debía hacerse esta reunión quedaba

difuminado entre las medidas para refrenar la inmoralidad del pecaminoso cargamento humano de la flota en tan santa empresa. El rey especificaba todos los pasos necesarios para garantizar que a bordo de sus barcos no se blasfemara, ni se bebiera, jugara, peleara y se evitara la sodomía, pero mantenía un abrumador silencio respecto a las tácticas. ¿Cómo, exactamente, se efectuaría el encuentro y cómo, concretamente, podría la Armada conseguir el control local del mar mientras Parma y sus vulnerables transportes de tropas cruzaban el canal? Algunas frases se refieren ciertamente al primero de estos puntos, pero sus implicaciones resultaban más alarmantes que esclarecedoras:

> Para el día de la batalla hay poco que advertiros en la forma de ordenar vuestra Armada ni el modo de combatir, pues esto se ha de ver sobre el hecho y cuelga del tiempo y ocasiones. Solo os […] advertid que el designo del enemigo será pelear de fuera por la ventaja que tiene de artillería y los muchos fuegos artificiales de que verná prevenido, y que al contrario la mira de los nuestros ha de ser envestir y aferrar por lo que les tienen en las manos, a que es menester que vays muy atento para hazerlo executar.

En todo esto, concluyó el rey, «procuraréys prevenir lo que viéredes ser necessario». La visión táctica del rey respecto a este problema puede resultar admirable, pero, al mismo tiempo, debemos censurar —como sin duda sus desafortunados comandantes hicieron en privado— su completa incapacidad a la hora de sugerir una solución.[796]

Durante tres meses, estos errores no pasaron de ser teóricos, dado el lento avance de la Armada. A pesar de todos los preparativos llevados a cabo por el duque en Lisboa, las provisiones comenzaron a escasear. Parte de la comida estaba podrida y probablemente lo había estado desde el principio; y el éxito de Medina Sidonia a la hora de aumentar el tamaño de la flota significaba que la cantidad restante era inadecuada. De modo que el duque redujo la ración diaria de bizcocho a una libra y también la carne. El inesperadamente lento avance

intensificó el problema aún más. El 20 de junio, como la flota tan solo había llegado hasta el cabo de Finisterre, Medina Sidonia no vio otra alternativa que recalar en La Coruña para adquirir nuevos suministros, pero una repentina y fuerte tormenta alcanzó a una parte de ella cuando intentaba entrar en el puerto, dispersando algunas naves y arrastrándolas incluso hasta las islas Sorlingas (Scilly).

Este desastre hundió el ánimo del duque, que redactó dos largos y minuciosos llamamientos al rey en los que volvía a reafirmar sin ambages las amplias objeciones que había expresado ya en el momento de su nombramiento, «por ver que se iba a la empresa de un reino tan grande y tan ayudado de los vecinos; y que, para ello, era menester mucha más fuerza de la que Vuestra Magestad tenía junta en Lisboa». Desde ese momento, la situación había empeorado: aunque la Armada entonces «queda con tan poca fuerça que es inferior a la del enemigo», el destino de la monarquía «depende del acertamiento o yerro desta jornada, en la qual Vuestra Magestad tiene juntas todas sus fuerças assí de naves como de artillería y pertrechos». Si estos bienes se perdían, llevaría «tiempo y mucho» sustituirlos. Por otra parte, en el momento de hacerse al mar, Medina Sidonia había encontrado a «la jente [de guerra] no tan plática como conviene» y a oficiales de los cuales «veo pocos o casi ninguno que entienda y sepa cumplir con las obligaciones de sus oficios. Y esto he lo experimentado», añadía, tal vez lanzando una andanada a Idiáquez y Moura: «No engañe a Vuestra Magestad nadie con dezirle otra cosa». [797]

El rey se enteró de este percance mientras atravesaba otra crisis en su estado de salud. «El cuydado que con tanta razon traygo», se lamentaba, «creo que me haze no andar bueno», y pedía a sus ministros «que se tiemplen por algunos días en embiar papeles». No obstante, sabía qué debía hacer, pues le

dijo a Vázquez que era

> menester mucho tiempo y ocupación para buscar tanto dinero como se ha gastado, y forzosamente se ha de gastar, para que no quede nada por hazer de my parte en lo que se ha començado. Y va tanto por llevarlo adelante que da poco lugar para poderse agora tratar ni pensar en otra cosa sino en esta.[798]

Por eso, las cartas pesimistas de Medina Sidonia recibieron su inmediata y entera consideración.

Cuando el duque abrió la respuesta del monarca, debió de palidecer:

> Duque primo. La carta de vuestra mano de 24 [de junio] he recibido y por lo que de vos conozco creo muy bien que todo aquello que allí me acordáys nace del zelo de mi servicio y desseo del acertamiento puramente. El estar tan seguro desto me haze declararme con vos mucho más que hiziera con otro […].

Tras este alarmante comienzo, el tono del resto de la misiva, aunque firme, era considerado y afable. Después de reafirmarse en las razones originales de la Empresa, Felipe echaba por tierra las objeciones y dudas del duque basándose en su propia y perversa lógica: «Que a ser esta una guerra injusta, pudiera tomarse esta tormenta por señal de la voluntad de nuestro Señor para desistir de su offensa; mas siendo tan justa como es, no se deve creer que le ha de desamparar, si no de favorescer mejor que se puede dessear». Los ingleses no tenían aliados, y sus fuerzas, recordaba el rey a su escéptico comandante, eran inferiores a las españolas. Si el viento era favorable, la flota podía llegar al canal de la Mancha en una semana, mientras que si permanecía en La Coruña constituiría un objetivo fácil, susceptible de ser destruida en su lugar de amarre o bloqueada en puerto mientras los ingleses asolaban las desprotegidas costas ibéricas y capturaban las próximas flotas procedentes de América y de India. «Yo tengo ofrecido a Dios este servicio», concluía Felipe en un tono que no dejaba lugar a más discrepancias: «Alentaos, pues, a lo que os toca».[799]

Esta vez, el instinto estratégico del rey era acertado. Disolver la flota, que tantos recursos había consumido, antes de

que hubiera conseguido ninguno de sus objetivos socavaría la reputación de España. Además, la marina inglesa podría, en efecto, llegar con facilidad a La Coruña, como había hecho el año anterior en Cádiz, y causar estragos mientras la flota permanecía anclada en puerto. Hasta aquí, de acuerdo; pero, desgraciadamente para sus planes, Felipe aprovechó la oportunidad que le ofrecía la demora para ejercer su característica supervisión minuciosa. Había recibido una copia de una carta a Parma, escrita por Medina Sidonia justo antes de zarpar de Lisboa, en la que este informaba de que «yo he hecho juntar a los pilotos y hombres pláticos desta Armada, que también lo son de toda la costa de Inglaterra, y propuéstoles que resuelvan en que puerto podría arribar esta Armada en aquella costa que estuviesse segura de los temporales», mientras aguardaba la noticia de que Parma ya tenía a sus fuerzas dispuestas. Los acontecimientos revelarían lo acertado de este plan alternativo, pero Felipe lo prohibió. «La sustancia sería llegar hasta daros la mano con el duque mi sobrino», le recordaba a Medina Sidonia, y «[asegurar] al duque el tránsito, pues no son los nauíos que tiene de calidad que sin auer limpiado de enemigos aquel passo pueda él saliros a buscar más lexos, pues son baxeles de tránsito y no de pelea».[800] La Armada no debía «arribar» a ningún puerto mientras iba de camino a recoger a las tropas de Parma. De modo que el principal punto débil de la «traza acordada» se mantuvo intacto.

No obstante, parece ser que Medina Sidonia recobró la confianza. El 21 de julio, exultante de alegría, volvía a hacerse al mar, y el día 30, con la costa inglesa a la vista, ordenó a los 130 barcos que tenía bajo su mando que se desplegaran en un orden de batalla en forma de media luna que medía cinco kilómetros de largo de un extremo al otro. Incluso los enemigos de España reconocieron que aquella constituía «la mayor flota

que jamás hayan visto los mares desde la creación del mundo» y «la combinación mayor y más poderosa que nunca se haya reunido en toda la cristiandad». El rey ya no podía hacer otra cosa aparte de rezar, y (según los frailes) toda la familia real pasaba tres horas diarias relevándose ante el Santísimo Sacramento en San Lorenzo para conseguir el éxito de la Gran Armada. Después de todas las crisis y pruebas enviadas por Dios, Felipe se sentía tranquilo y confiado en que «no queda nada por hazer de mi parte». Escribió a Idiáquez: «Están [las cosas] en balança, y no solo lo de allí sino de todas partes», porque «mucho cuelga agora de lo de allí».[801]

Al principio, parecía que «la balança» se inclinaba a su favor: los repetidos intentos de los ingleses por romper la formación de la Armada fracasaron y, el 6 de agosto de 1588, llegó cerca de Calais, solo a cuarenta kilómetros de Dunquerque, donde Parma tenía reunidas a sus tropas, y con el fondeadero designado de Las Dunas a la vista. La Armada permaneció allí durante treinta y seis horas. Después de todo, Medina Sidonia podía estar justificadamente tranquilo por haber cumplido con «lo que os toca». Para desgracia de los tripulantes y del plan de Felipe, treinta y seis horas no fueron suficientes.

Al parecer, tanto Medina Sidonia como Felipe esperaban poder establecer una comunicación rápida y fiable con el duque de Parma en cuanto la Armada se hiciera al mar, una suposición que revela una absoluta falta de familiaridad con la realidad de la guerra naval: resulta difícil imaginar que Santa Cruz hubiese cometido un error tan elemental. Al parecer, en ningún momento se le ocurrió a Medina Sidonia que sus mensajeros tenían que sufrir el acoso de los barcos hostiles que merodeaban por el canal o bien dirigirse a la costa francesa con la esperanza de encontrar un relevo de caballos que les transportara por tierra hasta Flandes. Era absurdo asumir que

llegarían —y menos aún que regresarían con una respuesta— mucho antes de que él alcanzara «la plaza acordada». Al final, ninguno de los mensajeros enviados para avisar a Parma de su avance llegó a Flandes a tiempo de conseguir gran cosa. El enviado despachado el 31 de julio, cuando la flota estaba llegando a la altura de Plymouth, no alcanzó el cuartel general de Parma hasta primera hora del 6 de agosto. Más avanzado aquel mismo día, llegó también el mensajero enviado desde la isla de Wight el 4 de agosto. Sin embargo, para entonces la Armada estaba anclada frente a Calais, poco más allá de su horizonte, aunque Parma tardó otro día más en tener conocimiento de ello. De modo que, aunque Medina Sidonia se quejaba reiteradamente de la lentitud de su avance, y trataba de aumentar la velocidad tal y como Felipe le había exigido, desde la perspectiva de Parma había llegado demasiado pronto.

Dado este fallo en las comunicaciones, Parma no podía en ningún caso embarcar a sus hombres a bordo de sus pequeñas embarcaciones el 6 de agosto para «darse la mano» con Medina Sidonia, porque no sabía que ese mismo día la Armada había entrado en el canal, y menos aún que había llegado a Calais. No obstante, Parma había preparado un meticuloso plan de embarque, y en esa fecha todas sus unidades comenzaron a dirigirse hacia los puertos. En el transcurso de las treinta y seis horas siguientes, casi veintisiete mil hombres lograron embarcar sin percances, una hazaña nada desdeñable para un ejército en cualquier época. Pero para entonces, como un historiador holandés contemporáneo expresó sin contemplaciones, «la Armada ya se había ido en humo».[802]

La noche del 7 de agosto, los ingleses lanzaron ocho brulotes contra la Armada y la mayoría de los capitanes cortaron sus amarras y huyeron, para descubrir, inmediatamente, que las fuertes corrientes que dominaban el canal de la Mancha hacían casi imposible recuperar su posición.

De golpe, la Armada había pasado de ser una fuerza de combate compacta e impresionante a ser una desbandada de naves presas del pánico. A la mañana siguiente, los barcos de guerra ingleses consiguieron romper el perfecto orden de formación de la Armada y causar daños irreparables en varios navíos. Al día siguiente, Medina Sidonia dio orden de que la flota zarpara de regreso a España rodeando Escocia e Irlanda, un recorrido de al menos cinco mil kilómetros que uno de sus oficiales calificó apesadumbrado como un «viaje de Magellanes».[803]

Evaluación de los costes

La primera noticia cierta del fracaso del «darse la mano» entre la Armada y el Ejército de Flandes llegó a la corte el 31 de agosto e, inmediatamente, Felipe trató de retomar el control de la situación con su pluma: a Medina Sidonia, dondequiera que se encontrase, le escribió que la nueva de la derrota que «sobre Calés la forzó a tomar el temporal […] me tiene con más cuydado que se puede encarecer», pero mandó a Idiáquez que redactara un extenso parecer de lo que el duque debía hacer en caso de que la Armada se hubiera ido a refugiar, bien a Escocia o a Emden (rehacerse en Irlanda y debatir la forma de llevar a cabo la invasión al año siguiente), o en caso de que hubiera emprendido el viaje de vuelta a España (desembarcar algunas tropas en Irlanda, a fin de crear una cabeza de puente para las operaciones del año próximo). El 15 de septiembre, emitió unas órdenes aún menos realistas: Medina Sidonia debía desembarcar en Escocia, aliarse con los católicos de aquel lugar y pasar allí el invierno.[804] Finalmente, Felipe había reconocido la necesidad de un plan alternativo.

Esta insólita disposición a permitir estrategias alternativas revela, tal vez con más elocuencia que ninguna otra cosa, que la autoconfianza del rey había recibido un fuerte varapalo. Cuando leyó el borrador de una respuesta a Parma, expresando

la esperanza «que se consiga el servicio que se ha pretendido hazer a Dios, y el reparo de la reputación de todos que está tan empeñado», el rey subrayó este pasaje. «Mýrese si sería bien quitar esto», le dijo a su secretario, «pues en lo que Dios haze y es servido no ay perder ni ganar reputación. Y es mejor no hablar en ello».[805] El 3 de septiembre, llegó un correo procedente de Francia con más noticias concretas sobre la derrota de la Armada y su huida hacia el norte. Los desconsolados encargados de descifrar los mensajes y los ministros del rey se pusieron a debatir quién de ellos debía transmitirle las noticias al rey. La elección recayó sobre Mateo Vázquez, su secretario y capellán con tantos años de servicio al monarca, pero incluso él lo hizo con gran turbación y de forma indirecta, ya que optó por citar el paralelismo desgraciado sugerido por un cortesano. «Quien vio al rey Luis de Francia, siendo santo, y en una empresa tan santa [la séptima cruzada, en 1250], morírsele su exército de pestilencia, ser vencido y captivado, cierto que no puede dejar de temerse mucho este sucesso [de la Armada]», y Vázquez sugirió que debían rezarse más oraciones para evitar un desastre aún peor. Esto fue demasiado para el rey: «Yo espero en Dios que no habrá permitido tanto mal como algunos deven temer», garabateó irritado sobre la misma carta, «pues todo se ha hecho por su servicio».[806]

En octubre, tras leer un doloroso relato del viaje de su Armada, Felipe escribió sobre la cubierta: «Todo esto he visto, aunque creo que fuera mejor no averlo visto, según lo que duele». En noviembre, cuando llegaron noticias de más pérdidas, temía que «muy presto nos habremos de ver en cosa que no querríamos ser nacidos. Yo a lo menos por no verla», y expresaba la ilusión de que «me ha de llevar para sí, como yo se lo pido, por no ver tanta mala ventura y desdicha».[807]Al fin y al cabo, unos quince mil hombres —casi la mitad de los

marineros y soldados que zarparon— perecieron en la Empresa de Inglaterra; al menos un tercio de los barcos nunca regresó a España; Felipe perdió a casi todos sus comandantes navales experimentados; y, como el propio rey calculó, la empresa había consumido diez millones de ducados.

Además de estas pérdidas materiales, Felipe había sufrido un gran fracaso moral. Tan pronto como, en julio de 1588, las tormentas dispersaron a la Armada, el nuncio en Madrid preguntaba (al igual que había hecho Medina Sidonia) si «estos impedimentos lo cual el diablo crea» quizá fueron una señal de que «Dios no aprueba de la empresa». En noviembre anotó que la pérdida de tantos navíos y hombres, junto con la falta de éxito, había «perturbado todos, porque se puede ver casi abiertamente la mano de Dios extendida contra nosotros».[808] Hasta los monjes de El Escorial, normalmente los mayores admiradores de Felipe, se sentían desanimados. Fray Jerónimo de Sepúlveda lo consideró «una de la más bravas y desdichadas desgracias que han sucedido en España y digna de llorar toda la vida […]. Casi toda España se cubrió de luto, porque muy pocos hubo que no les cupiese algo dello […]. No se oía otra cosa». Según su colega fray José de Sigüenza, fue «la mayor pérdida que ha padecido España en más de 600 años», porque, aparte de la destrucción humana, material y moral, el rey había colocado a España en una guerra abierta con Inglaterra y sus aliados que duraría aun después de su muerte.[809]

18. Felipe acorralado, 1589-1592

Poco después de que se conociera en España la suerte de la Gran Armada, tras «alguna oración y mucha consideración», el jesuita Pedro de Ribadeneira, uno de los más significados partidarios de la Empresa de Inglaterra, envió un análisis del fracaso a un consejero real. Aunque admitía «la necesidad precisa de lleuar la guerra adelante y buscar el enemigo, si no queremos que él nos busque y nos haga guerra en nuestras casas», sostenía que el rey debía abordar primero ciertos asuntos más generales:

> No podemos ciertamente saber el intento que su diuina Magestad ha tenido en el tan extraordinario succeso que ha dado a la armada tan poderosa de su Magestad, todavía el ver que en vna causa tan suya y tomada con tan sancta intención, y tan encomendada en todos estos reynos, y tan desseada y procurada de toda la Yglesia cathólica, no ha sido seruido de acudir a los piadosos ruegos y lágrimas de tantos y tan grandes sieruos suyos, nos haçe temer que ay graues causas por las quales Dios Nuestro Señor nos ha embiado este trabajo, y que por ventura él durará mientras que ellas duren.

Ribadeneira sugirió razones concretas por las que Dios había permitido a «las ánimas perdidas de los ingleses» asestar tamaño «açote y castigo universal» a Felipe e invitaba a Juan de Idiáquez, uno de los miembros de la Junta de Noche, el círculo más íntimo de consejeros del rey, a que «las represente a Su Magestad de la manera que juzgare más conuiene». La más notable era «que se ponga mayor cuydado en quitar peccados y escándalos públicos, specialmente si hubiesse algunos de personas grandes que tienen obligación de dar exemplo». Por otra parte, dado que Felipe «puede con tanta facilitad y con sola vna demostración de su voluntad emendar y corregir los excessos, paresce que Nuestro Señor le podrá pedir cuenta de lo que en esto no hiciere».[810] Felipe no perdió tiempo en llevar a cabo una «demostración» para «quitar peccados y escándalos públicos»: ordenó a sus jueces que abrieran un proceso contra Antonio Pérez por el asesinato de Juan de Escobedo.

El proceso de Antonio Pérez

En 1582, el rey había condenado a la princesa de Éboli a la muerte civil, confinándola en Pastrana bajo una estrecha guardia, y autorizado la recopilación de testimonios contra Pérez por dos visitadores: Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, en Lisboa, y Tomás de Salazar, en Madrid *(véase capítulo 15)*. Como en todas las visitas, los jueces reunieron las pruebas en secreto. En junio de 1584, Salazar presentó a Pérez una lista de cuarenta y un cargos distintos en relación con sus actividades públicas entre 1571 y 1584, y exigió que respondiera a ellos bajo juramento. Treinta y nueve de los cargos requerían que explicara de qué forma había adquirido determinadas sumas de dinero o algunos artículos concretos. Pérez comenzaba sus descargos agradeciendo la oportunidad de demostrar su inocencia, después de «cinco años ha sin ser oydo», y a continuación señalaba la irrelevancia de todas las alegaciones relativas a los hechos posteriores a su arresto en 1579 —dado que ya no se ocupaba de asuntos oficiales—, y para todas las demás tenía fácil respuesta. Pero los cargos 40 y 41 le resultaron más difíciles de rebatir, dado que «tratan del secreto y fidelidad del offiçio»:

> Que el dicho Antonio Pérez no guardó el secreto, como lo hauía jurado, antes le rebeló, por diferentes vías, a algunas personas, y escriuiendo cartas con particularidades del dicho secreto; y que en cartas para Su Magestad, por particulares respectos, añadía, mudaua, y quitaua en el descifrado dellas.

En su descargo, Pérez siguió los pasos de Bartolomé de Carranza una generación antes *(véase capítulo 7)*: lo negó todo y pidió a los hombres más eminentes del reino que declararan en su defensa, comenzando por el rey.

> Presenta por testigo en descargo y abono suyo a Su Magestad del rey don Phelippe nuestro señor; a don Gaspar de Quiroga, cardenal de Toledo, primado de las Españas, chanciller y inquisidor mayor, y del consejo de Estado de su Magestad; y al padre nuestro fray Diego de Chaves, confesor de Su Magestad y de su consejo. Los quales pide se ayan por presentados y sean examinados, en forma de derecho, dentro de los 15 días.[811]

En este punto, si no antes, «Su Magestad del Rey don Phelippe» debió de darse cuenta de que, para defenderse de tan graves alegaciones, Pérez trataría de incriminarle a él; y, en caso de que todavía no lo hubiera entendido, poco después Antonio Enríquez, cabecilla de los asesinos, escribió directamente al rey para explicarle cómo

> haber[me] Antonio Pérez engañado tan malamente, diçiendo que Vuestra Magestad mandaba matásemos a Escobedo, lo cual he visto después muy al contrario, sino que él nos lo mandó haçer por algún su particular designio, pues jamás me determinara a hacerlo si no fuera engañado de que Vuestra Magestad lo mandaba.[812]

Por primera vez, alguien acusaba explícitamente al rey de complicidad en el asesinato.

No obstante, en lugar de indagar en esta información, Felipe firmó una cédula que autorizaba el pago a Pérez de 200.000 maravedíes «por tantos de que se lo hizo merced en cada un año con el título de secretario de estado» y 150.000 más «que se le hizo merced de ayuda de costa para ayuda a su entretenimiento, entretanto que fuese la voluntad de Vuestra Majestad o se le hiciese otra merced equibalente».[813] ¡La generosidad de Felipe con un ministro acusado de treinta y nueve cargos de aceptar dádivas, dos de traicionar secretos de Estado y, ahora, uno de orquestar el asesinato de un eminente ministro real resulta como poco pasmosa! Pero, según parece, la intención del rey era infundir al exsecretario una falsa sensación de seguridad para que no esperara ningún castigo. Un mes después, los alcaldes de Casa y Corte se presentaron en el domicilio de Pérez, le pusieron grillos en los pies y esposas en las manos y le trasladaron ignominiosamente a la fortaleza de Turégano (Segovia). Felipe aprobó entonces la sentencia contra Pérez dictada por los visitadores: dos años de prisión, diez años más de destierro de la corte, la devolución de las dádivas que figuraban en los cargos y una multa de veinte mil ducados.

Con ello concluyó el primer acto del proceso contra Pérez. Casi inmediatamente, comenzó el segundo. Rodrigo Vázquez se reunió por fin con Enríquez, quien repitió bajo juramento su detallado relato de cómo y cuándo Pérez, afirmando obedecer órdenes del rey, había orquestado el asesinato de Escobedo. La verdad ya no podía ocultarse por mucho tiempo más, y tanto Pérez como Felipe tomaron medidas para protegerse a sí mismos. El exsecretario, afirmando que uno de sus captores «tenía orden de darle un bocado por mandado de Su Magestad», trató de escapar de Turégano a Aragón, pero no lo consiguió. Esto desencadenó varias medidas. Se subastaron muchos de sus bienes, se encarceló a su esposa y a su familia (que había planeado la huida) y se recuperó parte de los documentos comprometedores que tenía.[814] Como este último punto resultaba difícil, Felipe autorizó al presidente del Consejo Real para que ofreciera la libertad a la esposa de Pérez, doña Juana Coello, a condición de que esta entregara todos los billetes reales en su poder. Doña Juana se percató inmediatamente del peligro: «Señor», preguntó al presidente, «si en estos negros papeles consiste el descargo de mi marido en las cosas de Escobedo, que Su Magestad mandó a Antonio Pérez que hiziese lo que se sabe, ¿qué haremos nosotros sin ellos y sin más resguardo de Su Magestad para tantos enemigos como tenemos?». Fray Diego de Chaves, confesor real y también pariente de doña Juana, la tranquilizó diciéndole que tan pronto como diese los billetes el rey mejoraría sus condiciones y las de su marido. Tras pensarlo durante varios días, doña Juana entregó «dos baúles de papeles cubiertos de lienzo ençerado con sus sellos»[815].

Con su posición aparentemente salvaguardada, Felipe cumplió con su palabra: permitió que Pérez se reuniera con su familia y volviese a vivir con relativa libertad en Madrid, y en septiembre de 1587 ordenó que se le pagaran «todos sus salarios

asta fin del año de 84». Esta muestra de la continuación del favor real enfureció a Pedro de Escobedo, hijo mayor del asesinado Juan, quien tomó la justicia por su mano y envió a varios «hombres en busca o a matar» a los que mataron a su padre.[816] Esta vez, en marcado contraste con su actuación en 1578, Felipe dio orden de que se hiciera justicia con aquellos que «en desacato nuestro y sin temor de la justiçia, en esta mi corte y villa de Madrid mataron alevosamente a Juan de Escobedo, mi secretario». También autorizó a Rodrigo Vázquez el uso de «las diligencias que habéis hecho en este caso» —esto es, los testimonios secretos tomados en 1582— «no embargante que no hayáis tenido comisión nuestra en forma para poderlos haçer, por haberla tenido secreta». Además, otorgó poderes a Vázquez de Arce para que arrestara e interrogara a todos y cada uno de los sospechosos, y, «siendo neçesario para mayor averiguación, daréis el tormento o tormentos que el derecho dispone a la persona o personas que os pareçiese».[817]

El 30 de agosto de 1588, Vázquez de Arce hizo llamar a Pérez, por primera vez, para que respondiera bajo juramento a un detallado cuestionario sobre su papel en el asesinato de Escobedo, pero, pese a este espectacular principio, el caso volvió a quedar una vez más en punto muerto, quizá porque Felipe todavía esperaba poder evitar un proceso público en que su implicación llegara a ser conocida. Esta esperanza desapareció el 2 de septiembre de 1589, cuando Pedro de Escobedo acusó formalmente a Pérez de complicidad en el asesinato de su padre, cargo que hacía inevitable un juicio público.

El rey protagonizó entonces lo que parece un flagrante intento de incitación al delito. Chaves, al lado del rey en El Escorial, envió a Pérez una carta de consejo («he andado pensando conmigo si será bien, por lo que la caridad pide, dar consejo a quien no me lo pide») en la que sugería que «para

librarse vuestra merced de prisión tan apretada y tantos trabajos como ha padeçido sin propósito a lo que pareçe, ningún camino más llano veo que declarar la verdad de lo que pasó, cuanto al haber intervenido en la muerte que le piden, y por cúyo mandado», una clara referencia a la implicación del rey. Pero ¡Pérez no debía decir nada más!, continuaba sugiriendo el confesor. El secretario debía admitir su participación en el asesinato «sin decir las causas que hubo para que se lo mandasen: que a esto no se ha de llegar en particular, ni dar general a ninguna de ellas». Chaves concluía esta sorprendente carta refiriéndose a una preocupación concreta expresada por Pérez: si debía tratar de llegar a un acuerdo con Pedro de Escobedo fuera de los tribunales. Chaves lo aprobó, pero solo con la condición de que «esto había de ser sin meter en ello a Su Magestad». Puede que la prisión hubiera embotado el entendimiento de Pérez, porque, pese al evidente peligro, siguió el consejo de Chaves. Pocos días después, «por quanto entre my y Pedro de Escobedo» se ha «tenido algunos dares y tomares», el secretario firmó un «concierto» en que prometía pagar veinte mil ducados al hijo de su víctima, y, a cambio, Escobedo retiraba su acusación, afirmando que «a todos los perdonaba por hacer servicio a Dios quitarse de pleitos y diferencias y por habérselo pedido personas graves que se habían interpuesto».[818] El secretario admitía, por tanto, su culpa en el asesinato de Juan de Escobedo, pero a cambio solo recibía el perdón del demandante, no del rey ni de sus jueces.

Pérez no tardó en darse cuenta de su error. En diciembre de 1589, Felipe ordenó que su exsecretario declarase «las causas de la muerte de Escobedo» —precisamente lo que Chaves le había mandado no hacer— y Vázquez de Arce anunció que

> habiendo hecho relaçión al rey nuestro señor [de] que pareçía haber sido Antonio Pérez en ordenar la muerte a Juan de Escobedo con voluntad y consentimiento de Su Magestad, y que pareçía conveniente que constase este consentimiento en el proçeso para descargo del dicho Antonio Pérez […]. [Felipe] mandó que se

supiesen del dicho Antonio Pérez las dichas causas con lo que había en averiguación y probanza de ellos, pues él era él que las sabía y había dado notiçia de ellas a Su Magestad.

A partir de ese momento, los alguaciles que vigilaban a Pérez recibieron instrucciones de que «no le dejasen hablar ni comunicar con nadie, ni ellos propios hablasen, so pena de la vida».[819]

Pérez se atuvo al consejo de Chaves y afirmó que debía preservar «los secretos de su oficio» pese a la insistencia del rey en que los divulgara, hasta el 23 de febrero de 1590, cuando «teniendo ya ocho vueltas a los brazos» en el potro, confirmó todo lo que Antonio Enríquez había dicho. Tres meses más tarde, Vázquez de Arce leyó la sentencia: «Arrastrar y ahorcar y hacerle cuartos y secuestro de hacienda» por los crímenes de asesinato, «revelar el secreto de las materias y cosas de Estado de que fue secretario, y desçifrar falsamente las cartas que se enviaban por su mano a Su Magestad».[820] Anunció la sentencia en vano. El 19 de abril de 1590, Pérez escapó de su prisión y cruzó la frontera con Aragón, donde los jueces de Castilla no tenían jurisdicción.

La huida de Pérez destruyó a la princesa de Éboli. Temiendo que ella también pudiera huir, Felipe envió órdenes de poner fuertes rejas en todos los huecos y ventanas de su aposento. Ana protestó que «no es posible que Su Magestad tal quiera ni permita», pero se equivocó: Felipe la dejó en su «cárcel de la Inquisición» en Pastrana hasta que murió en 1592.[821]

El destino radicalmente distinto de las dos personas a quien Felipe arrestó el 28 de julio de 1579 dejó perplejos a sus contemporáneos y continúa asombrando a los historiadores. ¿Por qué rehusó el rey procesar a Pérez y a los seis asesinos que «en desacato nuestro y sin temor de la justiçia, en esta mi corte y villa de Madrid mataron alevosamente a Juan de Escobedo»?

Chaves ofreció un razonamiento general para un juicio secreto en la carta a Pérez pidiéndole que admitiera que había planeado la muerte de Escobedo. «Según lo que yo entiendo de las leyes», explicaba el confesor,

> el príncipe seglar, que tiene poder sobre la vida de sus súbditos y vasallos, cómo se la puede quitar por justa causa, por juiçio formado, lo puede hacer sin él, teniendo testigos […]. Y cuando él tenga alguna culpa en proçeder sin orden, no la tiene el vasallo que por su mandado matase a otro que también fuese vasallo suyo; porque ha de pensar que lo manda con justa causa, como el derecho presume que la hay en todas las acçiones del príncipe supremo; y si no hay culpa, no puede haber pena y castigo.[822]

Según este razonamiento, Felipe podría haberse persuadido de que era justo dar su «consentimiento» a un asesinato que Pérez afirmaba era necesario, pero solo si existía «justa causa, como el derecho presume que la hay en todas las acçiones del príncipe supremo».

Cabe suponer que el rey ya se había preocupado en 1580, cuando inició la visita sobre el comportamiento de Pérez, e incluso más en 1581, cuando él personalmente elaboró una lista de testigos señalados para que declararan contra su exsecretario. Pero cuando Vázquez de Arce le informó, el año siguiente, que se había «acabado este negocio de la princesa y Antonio Pérez», aunque Felipe sentenció a la primera a la muerte civil, prohibió un juicio público contra el segundo *(véase capítulo 15)*. Quizá Felipe había decidido alternar recompensas y castigos porque (como Henar Pizarro Llorente señalaba en su perspicaz biografía del cardenal Quiroga) era cierto que «otras personas cercanas a Antonio Pérez conociesen los planes para asesinar a Escobedo», entre ellos la esposa del secretario y «los Dos»: el marqués de Los Vélez y Quiroga.[823] No estaban solos. Los seis asesinos habían sido informados de los planes por el mayordomo de Pérez; y, sin duda, Chaves lo había sabido por boca del propio rey en confesión. Probablemente la princesa de Éboli también los conociera por

Pérez, quien, al parecer, compartía todos sus secretos con ella. Por otra parte, varios de estos protagonistas contaban con un nutrido número de sirvientes, de modo que alguno de ellos pudo escuchar alguna indiscreción y cotillear sobre ella. El amplio y cada vez más numeroso círculo de personas que sabían la verdad hacía imposible al rey utilizar contra Pérez el mismo «poder sobre la vida de sus súbditos» que había usado contra Escobedo y ajusticiarle en secreto.

Quizá Felipe esperaba que la muerte de su molesto prisionero acabara con el problema: después de todo, ese había sido el destino de muchos presos, y entonces Pérez se llevaría la verdad sobre el caso de Escobedo a la tumba, y nadie más tendría por qué saberla jamás. Pero si Felipe albergaba tales esperanzas, tuvo que abandonarlas en 1588, cuando permitió a Vázquez de Arce abrir un proceso, admitir pruebas conseguidas años antes y recurrir al tormento para obtener más. Pero ¿por qué precisamente entonces? Aunque el rey no dejó a la posteridad la explicación a esta extraña conducta, quizá la sucesión de reveses a la hora de preparar la Empresa de Inglaterra le condujera a llevar a cabo anticipadamente el consejo de Ribadeneira de poner «mayor cuydado en quitar peccados y escándolos públicos, specialmente si hubiesse algunos de personas grandes que tienen obligación de dar exemplo». ¿Era coincidencia que Vázquez empezase a interrogar a Pérez acerca del asesinato casi el mismo día en que llegó a Madrid la noticia de que la Armada no había podido «darse la mano» con el Ejército de Flandes? ¿Acaso la decisión de animar a Pérez a confesar su culpabilidad en septiembre de 1589 reflejaba la reputación perdida tras el fracaso del rey en impedir el desembarco de tropas inglesas en España y Portugal?

«La guerra queda abierta»

Felipe hizo todo lo posible para proteger la península. Cuando

el Consejo de Estado le recomendaba una nueva expedición para «ir derecho a Inglaterra y procurar conquistarla», el rey contestó:

> He holgado mucho de ver y entender todo lo que se dice en estos papeles, que es muy conforme a lo que se podía esperar de los que lo dicen, y a la intinción con que yo me moví desde el principio a la Jornada por servicio de Nuestro Señor y defensa de su causa y beneficio destos reynos […]. Yo nunca faltaré por my parte a boluer por la causa de Dios y bien destos reynos en quanto me fuere posible. [824]

Poco después, Felipe convocó a una delegación de procuradores de las Cortes de Castilla a El Escorial, donde pronunció un breve discurso. «Lo que me movió a hazer esta Jornada», les recordó, «fue el servicio de Dios, y bien y seguridad de la cristiandad y destos reynos». Ahora, continuaba el rey, «la guerra queda abierta» y «los enemigos quedauan muy fortificados con lo que hauían hecho para su defensa, y se podía temer viniesen a hazer algún daño». Y concluía diciendo: «Esto obliga a muy grandes y excesivos gastos, o dexarlo a terribles daños». Felipe envió a la delegación de vuelta a Madrid con un memorial, «todo escripto de letra de Su Magestad», en el que volvía a reiterar estos detalles.[825] En diciembre de 1588, las Cortes recibieron otro mensaje personal del rey en el que este afirmaba que «holgara de poder comunicarles y dezirles la cantidad cierta con qué se podría salir con el intento que se tiene; mas no sabe, precisamente, qué suma poder señalar». No obstante, dado que la fallida empresa había costado diez millones de ducados, «con lo mucho que es menester para el reparo de lo que falta, y la prosecución de la guerra ofensiva, pues no será menester menos para la defensa, siendo de mucho más daño y costa atender a solo ello».[826]

La decisión del rey de comunicarse con los procuradores «de palabra y por escripto, de su propia mano (cosa tan extraordinaria y nunca oída)», causó una impresión favorable y estos acordaron proporcionar a Felipe impuestos por valor de

ocho millones de ducados, pronto conocidos como «los Millones», «para la defensa de la religión y de sus reynos». Los procuradores compartían la opinión del Consejo de Estado de que la mejor manera de lograr estos objetivos era mediante una invasión de Inglaterra, porque, «derriuando este enemigo, se podrían tener por acauadas las guerras de Flandes, que tan costosas han sido y son a Su Magestad y a estos reynos, pues Inglaterra les da el favor para que se sustenten». Así pues, esperaban «que el exército y armada que se enviare a esta jornada sea para poder acometer y vencer, y poder recuperar la pérdida pasada y la reputación de nuestra nación y conseguir lo que se pretende».[827] Pero antes Inglaterra dio otro golpe a «la reputación de nuestra nación».

En mayo de 1589, sir Francis Drake volvió a las costas de Galicia al mando de una numerosa flota angloholandesa e hizo desembarcar una fuerza expedicionaria, algo que la Armada española no había conseguido hacer en Inglaterra. Tras saquear La Coruña y quemar algunos galeones, Drake atracó cerca de la desembocadura del Tajo y sus tropas iniciaron la marcha hacia Lisboa. Aunque se retiraron antes de llegar, esta audacia enfureció al rey, que el 23 de junio pidió más dinero a las Cortes, dado «quanto importava al servicio de Dios y suyo acudir a castigar el atrevamiento del enemigo». Pero ese mismo día también demostró lo poco que había aprendido de sus anteriores fracasos respecto a cómo ganar una guerra. Martín de Bertendona, el almirante de mayor rango que quedaba en España, había acudido a la corte para ofrecer algún consejo a su soberano «en caso que se huviese de hazer jornada el año que viene para Inglaterra», pero, fiel a su costumbre, Felipe replicó: «Me las avissaréis por scripto, no aviendo lugar para poderlo hazer en persona».[828]

El escenario estratégico empeoró de nuevo dos meses más tarde, con el asesinato del rey de Francia. En muchos aspectos,

Enrique III había sido muy útil a los propósitos de Felipe. Aunque fundamentalmente hostil a España, Enrique carecía de los recursos necesarios para causar grandes daños: tanto sus súbditos protestantes como los católicos le despreciaban y desconfiaban de él casi por igual, y las arcas reales estaban vacías. Dado que Enrique, al igual que sus hermanos, no tenía hijos varones legítimos, a su muerte muchos de sus súbditos franceses, y todos sus vecinos protestantes, reconocieron a su pariente varón más cercano, el líder hugonote Enrique de Borbón, como el rey Enrique IV. Felipe no podía admitirlo. «Mi fin es procurar principalmente el bien de la religión, y que permanezca en Francia la cathólica y se excluyen los herejes», recordó al duque de Parma. «Y assí, para asegurar su exclusión y ayudar a los cathólicos para que prevalezcan, viéredes que será menester entrar en Francia fuerzas mías abiertamente», debía llevar a cabo una invasión. Felipe asumía las consecuencias estratégicas de esta decisión:

> Con estas obligaciones en que pone las cosas de Francia (a que no se puede faltar por yr tanto en ellas como va) parece que pues no se puede atender a muchas cosas juntas sin que los padezcan todas, demás de que la hazienda no sufre, conviene necesariamente tomar forma en la de la guerra dessos estados [de Flandes], reduziéndola a deffensiva.[829]

Mateo Vázquez, entre otros, adelantó que esas economías serían insuficientes. El invierno de 1589-1590 había sido largo y duro, seguido por una mala cosecha. En febrero de 1591, Vázquez recibió un lamento más de su amo en el que Felipe se quejaba de «melancolia, que es muy mala cosa, aunque los tiempos la traen consigo y lo que pasa por el mundo, de que me cabe también su parte, porque me duele mucho ver el estado en que está la christiandad». Incurablemente enfermo y quizá por esa razón aún más franco, Vázquez contraatacó y advirtió al rey de que no podía «llevar adelante los gastos» de todas sus guerras ni ignorar «en que acá se va la gente acabando, y de manera que muchas personas de crédito que han venido de diversas partes

deste reyno dizen que por maravilla se topa con un hombre por los lugares pequeños, con que se va muy a priessa acabando la labrança y crianza». Según Vázquez, a menos que Felipe encontrara fuentes alternativas de ingresos, «se podrá temer por aquí el caerse todo de golpe, y por falta de hazienda»:

> Crea Vuestra Magestad que si Dios quisiera que todos los perniquebrados que acudieron por salud a Vuestra Magestad los sanara Vuestra Magestad, que diera a Vuestra Magestad virtud para ello; y que si quisiera obligar a Vuestra Magestad a acudir a remediar los trabajos del mundo, que diera a Vuestra Magestad hazienda y fuerzas para ello.

Felipe trató esta queja apasionada con notable ecuanimidad, aunque, por supuesto, la rechazó:

> Yo creo muy bien que os mueve el zelo grande que tenéis a my servicio a decir todo lo que decís, mas también podéis vos entender que no son materias estas para poder descuydar dellas quién tiene el cuydado que vos sabéis de lo que está a mi cargo, pues a nadie le duelen más ni va tanto en ellas como a my. Pero juntamente tienen mucho más dificultad de la que las gentes piensan […], demás de ir lo que va de la religión en ello, que se ha de posponer a todo.[830]

Felipe no cuestionó la prueba material del inminente desastre; en su lugar, su visión política basada en la fe lo llevó a ignorarla. El temor de Vázquez de que «por aquí el caerse todo de golpe» casi llegó a hacerse realidad, pues estallaron conflictos tanto en Castilla como en Sicilia y en Aragón.

Revueltas en Castilla, Sicilia y Aragón

El problema comenzó en marzo de 1591 en Madrid, donde la Junta de Policía, creada por el rey para el «benefficio y aumento desta villa de Madrid, y para que en ella aya la limpieza, hornato y policía que conviene», promulgó un decreto en virtud del cual se imponía una multa de tres ducados a todos los «carpinteros, silleros, ensambladores, entalladores, cocheros, carreteros y herreros» que saquen «sus oficiales, materiales, herramientas, bancos de sus oficios» a las calles, «ni salgan a trabajar a ellas fuera de sus tiendas». Tres ducados representaba una suma sustancial para un artesano, y, dado que «desta junta no hay recurso para ningún tribunal», un grupo de entalladores

y ensambladores de la Corte envió una petición directamente al rey rogándole que suspendiera el decreto. Felipe estaba en El Escorial, y así «no podían ellos hablar al rey», por lo que casi dos mil «ofiziales, zapateros, carpinteros e torneros, sombrereros, caldereros y de todos los demás ofizios» desfilaron por las calles de la capital clamando «Misericordia y justicia». Un grupo de ellos, con «bandera y atambor», se dirigió al Alcázar Real. Afortunadamente para Felipe, cuando don Cristóbal de Moura «dixo daría cuenta dello al rey en buena ocasión», la muchedumbre se dispersó, permitiendo de este modo a los alcaldes arrestar y encarcelar a unos diez oficiales y maestros, sentenciando a cuatro de los cuales a recibir doscientos azotes «por las calles públicas desta corte» y a continuación pasar cuatro años remando en galeras. Los demás fueron condenados a seis años de destierro.[831]

En palabras del conde de Chinchón, miembro de la Junta de Noche, «los castellanos no se conformarán con airear su descontento con los impuestos y tributos que les han sido cargados estos últimos años», y poco tiempo después de que se hubiera restablecido el orden en las calles de Madrid, las protestas contra las exigencias del rey afloraron en otras ciudades de Castilla, como Toledo, Sevilla y Ávila.[832] Mientras tanto, en Sicilia, donde la mala cosecha había provocado una situación especialmente inestable, los nobles del Parlamento se negaron a consentir ningún impuesto más. Sin embargo, puesto que carecían del apoyo del clero y las ciudades, tras algunas negociaciones y amenazas (entre las que se incluía la de movilizar un regimiento de caballería y llevarlo a las afueras de la capital), los líderes del movimiento quedaron aislados y fueron arrestados. La revuelta terminó en cuestión de semanas. En cambio, las Alteraciones de Aragón duraron casi un año y su supresión obligó al rey a desplegar catorce mil efectivos y le costó un millón y medio de ducados.

Las Alteraciones eran fruto de dos conflictos distintos. El primero, entre moriscos, la mayoría de ellos agricultores, y cristianos viejos, dedicados al pastoreo de ovejas y conocidos por *muntanyeses*. Sus enfrentamientos periódicos culminaron en 1588 con una serie de masacres llevadas a cabo en varias comunidades moriscas del condado de Ribagorza, un feudo de doscientas comunidades gobernado por los duques de Villahermosa, por parte de los *muntanyeses*, reforzados por el carismático Lupercio Latrás, jefe de un grupo de bandidos que llevaba casi dos décadas desafiando la autoridad de la corona. Felipe respondió enviando tropas a Ribagorza, tanto para proteger a los moriscos como para castigar sus enemigos. Latrás huyó a Inglaterra, pero, imprudentemente, se fue a Santander, donde los oficiales reales le capturaron y, pese a su reivindicación de que como aragonés no estaba sujeto a las leyes de Castilla, el rey le hizo encarcelar en el Alcázar de Segovia. Tras una investigación sumaria por parte de un juez castellano, fue ejecutado en secreto por traición.

El segundo conflicto se originó en 1589, cuando Felipe envió a don Íñigo López de Mendoza, marqués de Almenara, para convencer a la élite local de que aceptara un virrey no nacido en la provincia, con la esperanza de que un funcionario sin vínculos locales resultara más eficaz. Los aragoneses objetaron de inmediato que aquello era contrario al fuero. Muchos aragoneses consideraron que el intento de nombrar a un forastero como virrey —junto con la campaña contra Ribagorza, la ejecución sumaria de Latrás y la provocadora utilización de la Inquisición— formaba parte de un ataque global. El duque de Villahermosa redactó entonces un cartel invitando a los otros «señores de título» de Aragón a que «hagamos juntos un cuerpo para que atendamos al servicio de Su Majestad y bien universal de este reyno».[833]

Felipe y sus vasallos aragoneses, igualmente convencidos de

la justicia de su causa, ya estaban enfrentados cuando, en abril de 1590, Antonio Pérez cruzó la frontera desde Castilla. Dado que su padre había conseguido una declaración «de cómo era natural de Aragón», el exsecretario sabía que el proceso legal conocido como manifestación le proporcionaba cierta protección. Un súbdito aragonés que «manifestara» ser víctima de una arbitraria persecución de Estado podía exigir una vista en la corte del justicia mayor de Aragón, defensor de los fueros del reino («esencialmente un defensor del pueblo», según la afortunada expresión de Teófilo Ruiz, que «era el más celoso defensor de las libertades y privilegios aragoneses»).[834] Hasta que la corte llegara a un veredicto, este garantizaba la seguridad del acusado. Por otra parte, el manifestado podía exigir que sus acusadores presentaran ante la corte bienes confiscados, incluidos papeles. De modo que Pérez se personó en la cárcel de los Manifestados de Zaragoza para reclamar una vista ante el justicia mayor y exigir la devolución de los «dos baúles» de documentos entregados a fray Diego de Chaves cinco años antes, afirmando que estos probarían su inocencia.

Felipe ordenó a su fiscal en Aragón que acusara a Pérez ante el justicia mayor de los mismos cargos por los que había sido declarado culpable en Castilla, y envió una copia de los principales documentos que habían conducido a esta condena; pero Pérez respondió presentando varios billetes intercambiados con Felipe que parecían revelar la complicidad de su señor en la muerte de Escobedo, y pretendía publicarlos en un memorial redactado en su defensa. Cuando todas las imprentas de Zaragoza se negaron a aceptar el trabajo, Pérez llevó a un equipo de escribanos a su cárcel, donde hicieron treinta copias manuscritas que Pérez distribuyó a «muchos jueces, caballeros y personas» de España e Italia.[835]

Felipe se dio por vencido por el momento y ordenó a su fiscal que retirara todos los cargos relacionados con la muerte

de Escobedo, basándose en que hacían referencia a «secretos que no conviene que anden en ellos». En su lugar, cargó contra Pérez por «revelar el secreto de las materias y cosas de Estado de que fue secretario, y desçifrar falsamente las cartas».[836] Este acontecimiento llevó al exsecretario a intentar huir a Béarn (Bearne), el bastión protestante de Enrique de Borbón, archienemigo de Felipe. Pese a que no lo logró, su tentativa permitió a la Suprema acusar a Pérez de herejía y ordenar al tribunal de Zaragoza que le sacara de la cárcel de los Manifestados y le trasladara a las cárceles secretas que la Inquisición tenía en la Aljafería. Felipe instó al marqués de Almenara a que ayudara en el proceso. El justicia mayor aprobó a regañadientes el traslado, que los agentes de la Inquisición efectuaron el 24 de mayo de 1591.

Casi inmediatamente, Zaragoza estalló en violencia. Un ciudadano corría «con su espada desembainada, apellidando "Libertad" a sacar a Antonio Pérez», y, pronto, una multitud de tres mil enfurecidos ciudadanos rodearon la Aljafería y amenazaron con quemarla a menos que los inquisidores no solo permitieran a Pérez volver a la cárcel de los Manifestados, sino que liberaran también a los demás prisioneros. Entre tanto, otra multitud atacó a Almenara, causándole heridas tan graves que murió dos semanas después.[837] «Movidos algunos de sus pasiones», advertía un partidario del rey en Aragón, la liga de caballeros «tomaron el apellido de "libertad" para mover más a la gente común. […] Toda ha procedido de la oficina de los que saben mucha historia de los motines presentes y pasados de Flandes y de Italia para vengarse desta manera de la injusticia que dice le[s] hace el rey». Y concluía: «Vuelvo a decir que tengo vehementísima sospecha, no fundada en la imaginación, que si luego no se acude con mano poderosa y castigo apresurado, que ha de ser como lo de Flandes». Poco después, otro monárquico se hacía eco de los mismos sentimientos: «El

respeto que se debe a las Majestades divina y humana se va perdiendo, y si Su Majestad no pone sin dilación remedio en ello, tendremos otro Flandes».[838]

Algunos temían que la alteración diera ejemplo a otros. El duque de Gandía, hijo mayor del padre Francisco de Borja, pidió que el rey pensase «si esto de Aragón pasare adelante por vía de rompimiento»:

> ¿Qué seguridad habrá de que estarán muy quietos los portugueses, y cómo pueden ir las cosas de Italia, viéndonos acá turbados y embarazados con las guerras dentro de nuestras casas? Las demás cosas de Flandes, Francia e Inglaterra, Vuestra Señoría las sabe, y ellas mismas dicen cuán poco ha menester el rey buscar más guerra, estando tan cansado y gastado el Real Patrimonio de las muchas que ha tenido y tiene.

Los consejeros reales en Madrid estaban de acuerdo: «Se deue escusar con el prudente gouierno todas dissenciones dentro de casa», recordaban al rey, «pues con tener quietud en ella, y las armas fuera y lexos, ha crescido tanto este Imperio». Pero todos estos ministros pasaban por alto lo que Felipe consideraba la clave del asunto: los alborotadores se habían negado «a obedecer y respectar al Santo Oficio», y esto le parecía intolerable. Tenía que responder con la fuerza.[839]

Por casualidad, Felipe pudo desplegar inmediatamente una fuerza aplastante para restaurar la obediencia. Ya había empezado a movilizar un ejército en Castilla para la invasión del sur de Francia, y podía destinar fácilmente algunas unidades a acabar con los problemas en Aragón mientras marchaban hacia los Pirineos. De modo que, en julio de 1591, Felipe informó a sus ministros de que estaba «resuelto» a tomar todas las medidas necesarias para pacificar Aragón, «aunque sea poniendo en ello my persona, y lo que más fuere menester, y tomar el negocio con las veras que se deue; pues si por la religión se ha pasado y hecho en Flandes lo que se ha visto, y después en Francia, no siendo mýa, mírese quanto más obligación ay de acudir a lo proprio y tan vecino»; y ordenó al

justicia mayor que enviara a Pérez de vuelta a la Aljafería antes del 24 de septiembre de 1591. Una vez más, cuando los funcionarios del Santo Oficio trataron de sacar a Pérez de la cárcel de los Manifestados, una multitud invadió las calles y atacó a los soldados del rey. A consecuencia de estos violentos hechos, treinta personas murieron y muchas más resultaron heridas.[840]

Enseguida, Felipe envió una amenazadora carta a las ciudades de Aragón en la que les recordaba que, «hallándose con el ejército que había juntado para entrar en Francia, para efectos del servicio de Dios y bien de la Cristiandad, aunque con sentimiento, se veía obligado a no enviar aquel ejército a reinos extraños, y a emplearle en aquietar los suyos». Mientras tanto, el justicia mayor, Juan de Lanuza, invocó un fuero otorgado por el rey Juan II en 1461: «Que los aragoneses pudiesen y pueden tomar las armas contra cualesquier fuerzas extranjeras que entrasen en su reino en ofensa suya, aunque sea contra su mismo rey y príncipe heredero si en tal forma entrare». Felipe respondió, tratando de tranquilizar a sus súbditos aragoneses, asegurándoles que «mi ejército no entra a ejercer jurisdicción, sino que, yendo a su jornada de Francia, haría alto a dar fuerzas y calor de justicia, para que se puede ejercitar por mano de los ministros de la naturaleza de ese reino», ignorante de que el día anterior, el justicia mayor, tras declarar que Felipe había actuado contra el fuero, había llamado a las ciudades y pueblos del reino a reclutar y enviar tropas hacia Zaragoza, lista para el combate, para el 5 de noviembre. También solicitó la ayuda de Valencia y Cataluña.[841]

Pero Lanuza también actuaba desde la ignorancia: Felipe acababa de ordenar el desplazamiento de 17.000 efectivos hasta la frontera con Aragón. El 6 de noviembre de 1591, el ejército entró en el reino aragonés y comenzó su marcha hacia

Zaragoza. Solo Teruel, Jaca y algunas otras poblaciones respondieron a la llamada de Lanuza, dejándole con solo dos mil hombres. Absurdamente, en lugar de utilizar a sus hombres para asegurar que Zaragoza pudiese resistir un asedio hasta que llegaran fuerzas de socorro, Lanuza optó por oponerse al avance de las tropas reales en batalla. En cuanto sus partidarios se dieron cuenta de su enorme desventaja numérica, la mayoría huyó. Pérez, que había permanecido escondido en la capital desde los disturbios de septiembre, intentó de nuevo escapar a Béarn; en esta ocasión lo consiguió, afortunadamente para él, dado que Zaragoza pronto se rindió sin luchar. Un reducido grupo de rebeldes, entre ellos Lanuza y el duque de Villahermosa, se refugió en un pueblo fortificado cercano, pero, tranquilizados por la moderación del ejército real, enseguida se rindieron. Hicieron mal: Felipe ordenó el arresto del justicia mayor y de sus principales socios, y, el 20 de diciembre, un destacamento de tropas castellanas condujo a Lanuza a un cadalso en la plaza del Mercado de Zaragoza, donde fue decapitado en público, mientras que otro destacamento condujo a Villahermosa a una cárcel castellana. Felipe también autorizó el arresto de aquellos implicados en el asesinato de Almenara y de todos los que hubieran sido denunciados por desafiar la autoridad de la Inquisición.

En Madrid, la Junta de Aragón creada por el rey y compuesta tanto de inquisidores como de miembros de los consejos de Castilla y Aragón, presentó una larga lista de delitos, sospechosos y castigos. Pero Felipe rechazó este plan global de venganza, y, en lugar de ello, promovió una política de clemencia que «aquietará los ánimos de todos los de aquel reyno, que tan sospechosos y recatados deven estar de que por medio de mys ministros, y de los del Santo Oficio, se ha de proceder contra ellos».[842] Pero, al igual que en los Países Bajos y Portugal, la definición de «clemencia» para Felipe resultaba

bastante restringida: su indulto, emitido el 17 de enero de 1592, exceptuó a 150 conocidos participantes (encabezados por Pérez), cualquier clérigo o fraile que hubiera tomado parte en el motín, cualquier letrado que hubiera aconsejado la resistencia y los capitanes de las tropas que habían marchado con Lanuza contra el ejército real. Felipe nombró a Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, enemigo capital de Pérez, para que juzgara y castigara a todos los infractores que en ese momento se encontraban en Castilla; envió jueces especiales desde Madrid a Zaragoza para juzgar a los de allí; creó un tribunal especial para que se ocupara de las ciudades que habían apoyado a Lanuza; y ofreció una recompensa por la captura de las «principales cabezas» que habían huido, sobre todo la de Pérez.

En marzo de 1592, el conde de Chinchón, ministro principal para los asuntos aragoneses, informó a su sobrino don Francisco de Bobadilla, comandante del ejército de ocupación, que el rey «dice que le hará Vuestra Merced muy gran servicio en procurar por las vías que pudiese se prenda o mate a Antonio Pérez. Y que al que le diere vivo, podrá Vuestra Merced ofrecer catorce, diez y seis, y aún veinte mil ducados; y hasta ocho mil al que diere su cabeza».[843] Pero aparte de Pérez y algunos otros cabecillas, Bobadilla instaba a Felipe a ser clemente, citando el evidente paralelismo: «No tendré que traer ejemplo de griegos y romanos sino el que a Vuestra Magestad tiene puesto en tanta necesidad, que es el de Flandes». Incluso «tan gran capitán como el duque de Alba, y un ejército tan poderoso» no habían conseguido intimidar a «los flamencos, de su natural humildes y gente llana». De modo que Bobadilla inquiría retóricamente al rey: ¿qué pasaría si provocaba a los «aragoneses, gente de su natural alterada, colérica y arrojada, y que se inclinan a las armas, y las traen y usan desde que la edad les concede fuerza para ello»? Don Francisco acompañó esta sincera carta con una nota aún más directa a Chinchón: «Los

estados de Flandes están como se ve por la codicia de la décima» —la alcabala que Felipe había obligado a Alba a imponer pese a la opinión contraria de este *(véase capítulo 11)* — «y si ahora se sigue este camino en Aragón, que no lo puedo creer, sin duda se va por derecho a lo que ha sucedido en Flandes».[844]

La Jornada de Tarazona

Puede que la analogía de don Francisco diera en el blanco porque, poco después, Felipe adoptó el camino que había seguido con éxito en Granada y Portugal: decidió visitar personalmente la pacificada región. Al igual que en Flandes y Portugal, Felipe quiso que el castigo de los culpables de rebelión se ejecutara antes de su llegada y, como siempre, insistía en microgestionar la operación, especialmente en «aquella materia de Antonio Pérez, porque Su Magestad tiene mucha seguridad de que se le han de entregar vibo, converna cessen las pláticas que huviere para solo matalle», es decir, Felipe solo trataría con quienes se habían ofrecido a entregarle vivo.[845] Era un gran error. Hubiese sido bastante fácil asesinar a Pérez (algunas personas se ofrecían a hacerlo), pero su insistencia en asegurar la persona de su enemigo permitió a Pérez, como a Guillermo de Orange y a don Antonio antes que él, escabullirse entre los dedos de Felipe. Por eso el exsecretario quedaba libre para lanzar sus ataques, tanto por medios militares como propagando una imagen poco favorecedora del rey en sus escabrosas publicaciones, que ofrecían un retrato demoledor de Felipe como tirano caprichoso, mendaz, mezquino, vengativo y bastante obtuso.

Aun sin Pérez, las cárceles de Zaragoza se llenaron hasta tal punto que tanto la Inquisición como los jueces tuvieron que liberar «en fiado» al «menos culpado» para poder concentrarse en interrogar al resto (a menudo bajo tortura) a fin de que,

según las palabras del rey, «mejor se acierte todo, y saque en limpio la verdad». El rey revisó los interrogatorios con vivo interés. Así, después de que sus agentes capturaran a Miguel Donlope, un «exceptuado» que había huido a Béarn y luego había vuelto a entrar precipitadamente en el reino, Felipe escribió: «He holgado mucho de saver de esta prisión», y ordenó a sus captores «le tengan muy a recado y procuren sacar dél todo lo que supiere». Dos meses más tarde, tras estudiar la transcripción del interrogatorio de Donlope, el rey quiso saber más: «Que se aprieten al Miguel Donlope para que declare a qué personas ha embiado aý algunos cuerpos del libro que refiere en el 17 capítulo; y con quienes se escrive, porque en el 20 [capítulo] dice que vienen cartas para otros que para él». Poco después, Felipe siguió con similar interés el caso de Rodrigo de Mur, líder de una cuadrilla en Ribagorza arrestado en Toledo. «Muy buena prisión ha sido esta, y de mucha importancia», declaró; y cuando, al poco tiempo, Mur escribió una apelación, Felipe determinó: «Será lo más seguro no consentirle escrivir ninguna cosa».[846]

El rey esperaba encontrar testimonios que incriminaran a los nobles aragoneses encarcelados, especialmente a Villahermosa. Había enviado al duque al castillo de Burgos, pero, mientras viajaba camino de Aragón, Felipe decidió alojarse allí él mismo. Dado que el protocolo prohibía que el rey permaneciera bajo el mismo techo que un grande caído en desgracia, hizo trasladar a Villahermosa a la fortaleza de Miranda de Ebro, donde tan solo unos días después «murió de enfermedad breve». El hermano de Villahermosa, el conde de Luna, señaló recelosamente que esto sucedió «sin entender que estaba enfermo sus deudos», de manera que «primero se supo la muerte que la enfermedad». Aunque no llegó a acusar a Felipe de asesinato judicial, Luna manifestó que «a lo menos» la muerte de su hermano «fuese de propósito». Los apologistas del

rey no hicieron nada por disipar esta sospecha, argumentando que el duque era culpable de traición y «bien claro es que de haberse de ejecutar por una justicia, no había por qué se encubriesen».[847] Este era el mismo argumento que Chaves había utilizado tres años antes respecto al caso de Escobedo: «El príncipe seglar, que tiene poder sobre la vida de sus súbditos y vasallos, cómo se la puede quitar por justa causa, por juiçio formado, lo puede hacer sin él, teniendo testigos»; y numerosos testigos habían incriminado a Villahermosa. Aunque Felipe afirmó que el duque había muerto de causas naturales, dos décadas antes había afirmado igualmente que el barón de Montigny había fallecido tras una «enfermedad breve», aun cuando, bajo el hábito franciscano con el que fue apresuradamente enterrado en la iglesia de Simancas, su cuello mostraba las marcas del garrote que le había sido aplicado por orden expresa del rey *(véase capítulo 11)*.

En total, tanto la Inquisición como los tribunales del rey privaron de la vida al menos a cuarenta aragoneses por la rebelión, e impusieron castigos corporales o destierro a otros sesenta. Muchos de ellos sufrieron la ignominia añadida de que sus casas fueran arrasadas y sus bienes confiscados. Con ello Felipe quedó satisfecho. Cuando la Suprema pidió permiso para juzgar a once culpados más «en ausencia», el rey se negó. «Aunque es así que todos los XI contenidos en este memorial han sido muy culpados, me pareció suspender la respuesta» hasta «saber el estado de lo de allá y lo que más convernía para su buen fin, de que espero que ha de resultar mucho servicio a Nuestro Señor».[848]

Tras una tranquila marcha por Castilla la Vieja y Navarra, Felipe hizo su sexta visita al reino de Aragón [véase lámina 42]. En noviembre de 1592, por última vez, Felipe «salió de su coche de caballos y se montó en un corçel que era completamente blanco» para hacer su entrada en Tarazona, donde las Cortes le

estaban esperando. Este majestuoso gesto dejó atónito al séquito real:

> Nos regocijamos que se produjera una entrada como esta, pues era poco usual ver aparecer al rey montado a caballo a la provecta edad de 66 años después de haber pasado muchas enfermedades y haber tenido tantas recaídas, todo lo cual nos pareció ciertamente cosa de gran admiración; pero el grande y magnánimo corazón que tenía nuestro monarca le permitió soportar airosamente todos estos trabajos y fatigas, por las ganas que tenía de restaurar y apaciguar a este pueblo que hasta hace muy poco tiempo había sufrido tantos trastornos.[849]

Las Cortes de Aragón llevaban varias semanas de sesiones y ya habían complacido los deseos del rey acordando que la legislación necesitara solo de una aprobación por mayoría, y no por unanimidad, incorporando el condado de Ribagorza al realengo y modificando los fueros con el fin de que resultara más difícil para un sospechoso de traición ampararse en ellos, como había hecho Pérez. También reconocieron entonces el derecho real a nombrar a un «forastero» como virrey y juraron obediencia al príncipe como futuro soberano. El rey, por su parte, declaró un perdón general, pese a una nueva demanda de la Suprema para condenar a otros culpables de haber desafiado su autoridad. Felipe explicó a los inquisidores:

> No se podía escusar, y la forma ha sido buena y el termino bastante; y por lo que convenía escusar la dilación de los nuevos edictos, me resolví que se publícase a Çaragoça el perdón del Santo Oficio y en que no se llamasen nuevas personas. Y así hizo. Y con esto, y con el castigo pasado, y buenas leyes que parece que quedan en aquel reyno, espero en Nuestro Señor ha de quedar la gente dél escarmentada y con mucho cuydado a obedecer y repectar al Santo Oficio.

El rey sostenía que mantener la autoridad de los inquisidores era «la principal causa que me ha movido a tomar estos negocios con las veras que se ha visto». Y así lo había hecho; ya era hora de mirar hacia delante.[850] Sin embargo, el ejército del monarca permaneció en el reino un año más a fin de llevar a cabo otras medidas encaminadas a garantizar la obediencia. Así, el ejército hizo un censo de los moriscos, confiscándoles ocho mil arcabuces y numerosas armas de pequeño tamaño; ayudó a los ingenieros a construir una serie

de fortalezas, castillos y torres en los Pirineos para impedir otra «entrada de los luteranos por las fronteras de ese reino»; y supervisó la construcción de una enorme ciudadela alrededor de la Aljafería para proteger las cárceles secretas de la Inquisición.

Durante su viaje de regreso de Tarazona a Madrid, y pese a las temperaturas extremadamente bajas («me atreveré decir», escribió Jehan Lhermite, «que ni en los Países Bajos ni en Alemania puede haber mayores fríos que los que sentimos aquí»), el rey tenía buenas razones para sentirse satisfecho. Su firme reacción a las Alteraciones de Aragón puso fin a la peligrosa oleada de rebeliones en España: no solo no se producirían más motines durante su reinado, sino que tampoco los habría durante toda una generación. Es más, cuando en 1640 Cataluña se rebeló y pidió ayuda a sus vecinos, Aragón se mantuvo leal al rey.

Según el meticuloso cálculo de Lhermite, el rey y su séquito habían recorrido ochocientos kilómetros durante los ocho meses anteriores y, el 30 de diciembre, llegaron sanos y salvos a la capital. Nada más llegar, Felipe pasó «por el monasterio que llaman de las Descalças para ver allí y saludar a su hermana la emperatriz y a su hija la infanta doña Margarita» para luego permanecer el resto del invierno en el Alcázar, como era habitual.[851] Pese a estos indicios de normalidad, la Jornada de Tarazona marcó un hito en el reinado de Felipe. El largo viaje dejó agotado al rey. Ya no era cuestión de hacerle entrar en Madrid a lomos de un «corçel que era completamente blanco»; en lugar de ello, Felipe entró en su capital desplomado en la trasera de su carro, con las persianas echadas. Nunca más se haría cargo personalmente de una crisis, y rara vez volvería a someter los papeles que recibía al mismo intenso y continuo escrutinio. Cuando ya se aproximaba a su sexagésimo séptimo cumpleaños, el control del rey sobre el poder empezó a flaquear.

19. Camino de la tumba y más allá, 1593-1603

Un endurecimiento de las arterias

En 1590 el marqués de Velada, ayo del príncipe de Asturias, resumía la vida del viejo monarca como poco más que «caza, trazas, jardines»; y los monjes jerónimos de San Lorenzo de El Escorial prestaron un considerable apoyo a esta desdeñosa opinión en sus crónicas, concentrándose en cómo y cuándo el rey cazaba, revisaba planos arquitectónicos y disfrutaba de sus jardines. Pero fuera del recinto del monasterio, circulaba una oleada de críticas más ásperas contra el rey y sus políticas. Según el cronista real Antonio de Herrera, las revueltas en Castilla, Sicilia y Aragón en 1591 dieron lugar a

> varios juyzios llenos de duda y de temor. Los buenos sentían los trabajos y desventuras; los otros en odio del estado presente, que tenían por miserable, se alegravan, haziendo cargo al rey, de que en tanto peligro se estava gastando el tiempo en cosas y negocios de menos importancia, afirmando que si se moviera con su presencia, se quietara todo.

En 1595 comenzó a circular un amargo calambur: «Si el rey no acaba, el reino acaba».[852]

Las especulaciones sobre si el rey estaba a punto de «acabar» habían comenzado algunos años antes. En julio de 1586, el diplomático francés Longlée informó de que Felipe «parecía envejecido y más pensativo» porque «la gota le causa dolor»; en efecto, el rey estuvo incapacitado en la cama durante varias semanas ese verano. Un año después, Felipe contó a su hija Catalina que el dolor

> no me deja andar, sino con ayuda y esto no siempre; y ahora me ha tenido cinco o seis días sin andar y aun en la cama por haberme buelto a una rodilla. Y lo que más me ha durado es en esta mano, que no me ha dejado escribir ni hacer nada con ella hartos días y por esto no os he escrito en ellos; y también los ojos he tenido no muy buenos.[853]

En marzo de 1588, Felipe volvía a disculparse de nuevo con

Catalina de «no haberos escrito antes»: la causa «ha sido habérseme anticipado la gota más que solía, y así ha dos meses que me dio». Además, «fue menester sangrarme una vez y purgarme otra, y tuve mucho hastío y mucha sed, que todo me ha tenido harto flaco y así voy volviendo despacio», aunque «todavía ando con palo». Al mes siguiente, Longlée advirtió que «Su Majestad está muy delgado», y algunos retratos regios en aquella época le muestran con las mejillas hundidas y los ojos cansados [véase lámina 43]. Pese a una asombrosa variedad de instrumentos y polvos para el cuidado de su dentadura, perdió todos sus dientes uno por uno. En 1587 pasó por una experiencia especialmente dolorosa: «Le han dexado escandalizada la dentadura, y con pérdida de uno que lo ha sentido harto».[854]

«Sentido harto»: no debemos olvidar que, al igual que todos sus contemporáneos, Felipe no contaba con analgésicos o antibióticos. Para reducir el dolor constante de sus extremidades, recurrió a una «silla especial para la gota», adaptable a varias posiciones, desde la casi vertical a la horizontal. Esta silla «le servía para descansar y distender todos los miembros de su cuerpo cuando salía de su lecho de enfermo». A partir de 1595, Felipe pasaba muchos días

> sentado en ella desde la mañana cuando se levantaba hasta la noche cuando se acostaba. Entonces el rey se vestía con ropas más ligeras, esto es, con un jubón, calzas sencillas […] con su casaca de tafetán y su ropa de noche. Se acostaba allí como si estuviera en su propia cama, pues la silla era ancha y amplia [véase lámina 44].[855]

La mente del rey, al igual que su cuerpo, fue deteriorándose durante su última década. Parece que un endurecimiento de las arterias había hecho mella en él, y se quejaba no solo de no tener tiempo para tomar decisiones (lo que siempre había hecho), sino también para pensar incluso en tomarlas. Cuando Mateo Vázquez le hizo la excelente sugerencia de que el presidente del Consejo Real solo debía permanecer en el cargo

durante tres años, al igual que los virreyes, el rey replicó con cansancio: «Todo esto es para myrar mucho en ello, y así yré pensando en ello, aunque ay agora tantas otras cosas que pensar que no sé cómo queda juyzio en la cabeza. Dios nos ayude». Sin embargo, se negaba a delegar poder. Como el nuncio Camillo Caetani refería en 1594, aunque «el rey es viejo, continuamente enfermo», no obstante «quiere dar la mano en todos asuntos, y según su viejo estilo y costumbre de aprovecharse del beneficio del tiempo, fiándose de pocos, se encarga de negociaciones largas, difíciles y peligrosas».[856]

Los despachos de Caetani, el único diplomático que por entonces era recibido en audiencias personales, revelan un cierto patrón de altibajos que caracterizó la salud del rey durante sus últimos años. Por ejemplo, en abril de 1596, el nuncio informó de que algunos días Felipe «hacía la fatiga normal de escribir y leer» e incluso «escribió de su puño a Su Santidad» una carta, en tanto que en junio asistió a las corridas de toros y juegos de cañas, y «todo el pueblo le ha visto en un palco, caminando a pie sin ayuda o bastón, levantado y sentido, con su espada y traje ordinario, para cinco horas». Pero, al acudir al mes siguiente a una audiencia, Caetani encontró a «Su Majestad mucho más caído y débil de lo acostumbrado, más de lo que yo he visto jamás». Mostraba «gran debilidad en el hablar y el mover las manos, si bien en lo demás actúa con la acostumbrada memoria y prontitud de sentimientos».[857]

Este patrón de altibajos encierra la clave para comprender los últimos años del reinado. Por un lado, los intervalos de relativa buena salud permitían a Felipe mantener en última instancia el control de las políticas llevadas a cabo por sus ministros; por otro, la conciencia de que la enfermedad podía dejarle incapacitado en cualquier momento dio lugar a cambios administrativos dirigidos a garantizar que el gobierno central funcionara sin problemas pese a que él no pudiera participar

directamente. En Madrid, un nuevo comité de ministros de máxima experiencia, llamado la Junta Grande, desempeñó un papel vital a la hora de resumir y evaluar las consultas enviadas por cada consejo central antes de enviar el informe a la Junta de Noche, que (al igual que antes) acompañaba al rey y añadía sus propias recomendaciones antes de someterlo a la decisión de Felipe. Este procedimiento reducía una consulta de varias páginas a una sola línea y veinte consultas a una sola página. Jerónimo Gassol, que se convirtió en secretario de la Junta de Noche tras la muerte de su cuñado Mateo Vázquez en 1591, se ocupaba tanto de las cartas como de los memoriales dirigidos «al rey en su mano» *(véase capítulo 4)*. Normalmente, el rey dictaba su rescripto, que Gassol escribía, y luego añadía su rúbrica; pero a veces Felipe demandaba más información o consejo antes de llegar a una decisión. «Comunicad esto con los tres que estaban antes en la Junta que tienen más noticias de esto, esta noche o a la mañana», le ordenó Felipe a Gassol acerca de una consulta, «de manera que antes que yo me levante me diga don Cristóbal [de Moura] lo que les pareciere para que, entendiéndose yo entonces, me pueda resolver».[858]

En 1593 Felipe decidió duplicar el tamaño de la Junta de Noche, conocida a partir de entonces como Junta de Gobierno. Primero incorporó a su sobrino, el cardenal archiduque Alberto, quien había servido como virrey de Portugal desde la partida del rey una década antes. Alberto regresó a Madrid, donde dio audiencias y recibió a embajadores en nombre de Felipe, pero no presidió la Junta. El rey otorgó este honor al príncipe de Asturias, si bien acompañado siempre de su ayo, el marqués de Velada. Felipe decretó entonces que en todos los asuntos «en que poco más o menos se entiende mi voluntad (inquirir culpas, apresurar executiones de cosas resueltas, dar algunos premios y ventajas moderadas, y algunos oficios menudos)», la Junta de Gobierno podía «despachar luego

asentando las respuestas por escrito en las márgenes o encima de las consultas, y se me enviarán a señalar». El rey mantenía un control mayor sobre «otros negocios más graves, como son los que tocaren en administraçión de haçienda, assientos de dinero» y defensa: con estos, «se me imbiará por escripto en papel aparte el paresçer de la junta para que yo ponga o haga poner en el mismo papel las resoluçiones que yo tomare, y hecho esto luego en bolviendo los papeles y entendida por ellos mi voluntad en cada negoçio destos se assentará la respuesta y resolución en las mismas consultas y retornará a ymbiar, y yo las haré señalar del prínçipe mi hijo». Gassol devolvería luego cada consulta al órgano que la había remitido para que se procediera a su cumplimiento.[859]

Más adelante, Felipe retocaría este sistema. En primer lugar, tras la muerte de fray Diego de Chaves en 1592, los ministros del rey le rogaron que «mandase nombrar confesor, porque estaban muchas cosas de conciencia detenidas y no se determinaban a quién darlas»: finalmente eligió a fray Diego de Yepes (el candidato de Cristóbal de Moura), y, hasta la muerte del rey, Yepes no solo escuchó sus confesiones, sino que también determinó si ciertos proyectos concretos eran «lícitos en conciencia» y envió papeles de asesoramiento a su amo. En segundo lugar, el rey fue comunicando cada vez más sus órdenes a través de Moura, aunque al principio lo hizo clandestinamente: así, en 1594, encargó a Moura que le dijese «a Gasol que ponga en esa consulta una respuesta conforme a ese papel vuestro, y sin que parezca que lo es, sino mýo. Y me lo embie a señalar».[860]

Estos cambios administrativos consiguieron tres objetivos. El primero, que, aunque Felipe siguiera teniendo la última palabra en las decisiones referentes a los «negocios más graves», cuando caía enfermo, Moura le representaba: era el privado real en todo menos en el nombre. Por otra parte, cualquiera que

fuese el estado de salud del rey, la Junta podía ocuparse de los asuntos rutinarios de gobierno de una forma ordenada, y, si Felipe fallecía repentinamente, se encargaría de supervisar la transferencia de poder. Sobre todo, según la acertada frase de Antonio Feros, la Junta servía «como tutor colectivo del príncipe Felipe»: exactamente igual que su padre a su misma edad, al presidir las reuniones diarias de los principales ministros, había ido aprendiendo a gobernar una monarquía que pronto sería la suya.[861]

Mientras tanto, a pesar de sus múltiples fracasos, Felipe proseguía la misma política desastrosa contra Inglaterra y Francia. En octubre de 1596, ordenó a su almirante, don Martín de Padilla, que sacara una fuerza expedicionaria reunida en los puertos de Galicia para ir a Irlanda. Cuando Padilla objetó que emprender la travesía en fechas tan avanzadas del año ponía en riesgo la pérdida de toda la flota, Felipe recurrió al mismo tipo de chantaje espiritual que ya había utilizado en el pasado contra Alba, Santa Cruz y Medina Sidonia. «Torno a dezir y mandaros expressamente», bramaba,

> que sin esperar a otra cosa más os partáys en el nombre de Dios y hagáys lo que os tengo ordenado en el viaje y en toda la jornada. Que aunque veo que tan adelante está el tiempo y lo que se aventurara en él, esto se ha de fiar de Dios, que tanta merced nos haze; y parar con lo començado fuera afloxar en Su servicio y hazer los gastos sin provecho y hallarnos sin gente al tiempo del menester.[862]

Padilla cumplió la orden, pero, como él había predicho, las tormentas descargaron sobre la flota nada más abandonar puerto, causando la pérdida de muchos barcos y unos dos mil hombres.

Aunque Felipe fracasó en sus intentos de atacar a Isabel en 1596, esta en cambio le infligió graves daños. Durante dos semanas de julio, una fuerza angloholandesa ocupó Cádiz y luego incendió la ciudad, llevándose consigo numerosos rehenes y dos galeones reales, además de destruir otros barcos y

propiedades por valor de cuatro millones de ducados antes de continuar hacia el norte, aparentemente con la intención de atacar Lisboa. Como don Juan de Silva, capitán general de Portugal, observó amargamente: «La reputación de un rey de España se puede mantener sin ganar a Londres», pero «no se puede conservar ni recuperar perdiendo a Lisboa en la forma que se perdió a Cádiz». Silva se apresuró a organizar la defensa de la capital lusa, pero, aunque los nobles portugueses estuvieron de acuerdo en movilizarse, se negaron a servir a las órdenes de un comandante castellano nombrado por el rey. Afortunadamente para Felipe, los ingleses zarparon de vuelta a casa sin poner a prueba su popularidad en Portugal.[863]

El rey y las Cortes

Como de costumbre, todas estas derrotas no hicieron la más mínima mella en la determinación de Felipe «de fiar en Dios» y continuar combatiendo contra sus múltiples enemigos en múltiples frentes, pero sí le obligaron a buscar nuevas fuentes de ingresos, dado que sus guerras le suponían un gasto de alrededor del doble de sus ingresos totales. Volvió a convocar a las Cortes de Castilla y les pidió todavía más impuestos, pero la asamblea iniciada en mayo de 1592 duró el doble que las Cortes anteriores, en gran medida debido a que algunos procuradores se opusieron a todas las propuestas fiscales del gobierno. Los ministros de Felipe empezaron recordando a las Cortes que, «demás de tener Su Magestad acauado y consumido todo su real patrimonio, deue trece millones de deudas sueltas» y «se puede muy bien decir que son acauados todos los medios y arbitrios de que su Magestad se podía prevaler para el sostenimiento y defensa destos reynos»; pero estaban perdiendo el tiempo. «Casi todos los procuradores se inclinarán a suplicar a vuestra magestad con mucha instancia antes de tratar a otra cosa, se sirva de mandar moderar los

gastos de la guerra, así en Flandes como en otras partes».[864] En abril de 1593, un procurador declaró abiertamente «que aunque las guerras de Flandes, e Inglaterra y Francia son santas y justas, se debe suplicar a vuestra magestad que cesen en la forma que se pudiere», mientras que otro imploró «que Su Magestad […] suspenda por ahora las dichas guerras, dexándolas en el estado que mexor se pueda».[865]

A Felipe siempre le habían molestado las críticas, y, en esta ocasión, ordenó a sus ministros que reprendieran a los procuradores por cuestionar su política exterior impulsada por la fe: «Darles a entender cuán forzosos e inexcusables han sido los dichos gastos y guerra para alejarla destos reynos, que no sienten en ellos las miserias que se padecen en otros de la christiandad». Los procuradores «pueden y deben fiar de mí, y del amor que tengo a estos reynos, y larga experiencia del gobierno de ellos, que siempre hago lo que más conviene al beneficio de ellos y en esta conformidad les hable largo» y «aconsejarles que por ningún caso traten de venirme con semejante respuesta».[866] Felipe también trató de ganarse a algunos procuradores ofreciéndoles sobornos, mientras que a otros los intimidó con arrestos sumarios y registros domiciliarios. Incluso recurrió al apoyo de «poderes más altos». «Es menester», declaró, que «los teólogos de Madrid estén prevenidos, para que acudiendo los procuradores del reyno a informarse, en siendo respondidos, los hallen enterados del caso y justificaciones que hay para acudir al remedio de las necesidades que se padecen» (y exigió que los teólogos compartieran con él lo que averiguaran).[867]

En lugar de ganarse a «los dificultosos» (como el gobierno llamaba a sus críticos), la intransigencia real fomentó en las Cortes —quizá por primera vez en la historia— «una oposición organizada con un proyecto político coherente»: un proyecto que I. A. A. Thompson ha denominado «Primero Castilla».

Para la primavera de 1596, esa oposición se había vuelto ya tan articulada e inflexible que algunos ministros se mostraron a favor de disolver las Cortes para que «vinieran otras que no estuvieran aquí tan prendados de sus pretensiones, ni tan pláticos con quien lo tratáramos».[868] Entonces se produjo el asalto angloholandés a Cádiz, que Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo consideró la «culminación de la técnica de operaciones militares anfibias practicadas durante tanto tiempo contra la Monarquía». Según este historiador, «el episodio fue percibido en España como una vergüenza nacional y una irreparable humillación, originando una ola de pesimismo y tristeza».[869]

Poco después de enterarse de la noticia, Felipe redactó para las Cortes una dura reprimenda en la que enfatizaba:

> La experiencia de lo que empieza ya a probar en casa nuestra, cuán conveniente ha sido tener ocupado al enemigo en su tierra cuando se ha podido, y cuán importante fuera haber hecho agora lo mismo si los medios no hubieran faltado […]. Ninguna defensa se puede hallar para la casa propia como hacer la guerra en la ajena: quedará bien claro y entendido que quantas guerras yo he traído por allá fuera han sido por mantener el sosiego, paz y quietud en estos reynos y alejar dellos los trabaxos que trae consigo la guerra.[870]

Convenientemente escarmentados, los procuradores votaron un nuevo y elevado impuesto, pero añadieron numerosas condiciones: que el dinero solo podía utilizarse para pagar la defensa de España, no para ninguna guerra extranjera; que las propias Cortes debían supervisar la recaudación y el desembolso de los fondos; que tanto el rey como el príncipe «prometan y aseguren por sí y sus sucesores la inviolable observancia dél, y de cada cosa en particular»; y que cualquier incumplimiento de estas y otras condiciones invalidaría el voto. El rey rehusó: «Algunas condiciones ay que, aunque mis sucesores las quieran cumplir, y yo, no sea posible».[871]

Mientras el rey andaba en estos regateos, sus guerras continuaban agotando sus recursos. Incluso antes del saqueo de Cádiz, el marqués de Poza, presidente del Consejo de

Hacienda, describió a Moura la insostenible situación financiera del rey con la misma franqueza que los «dificultosos» en las Cortes:

> Mire Su Magestad que es ynposible tenerse en pie esta máquina, pues estando consumido quanto su Magestad tiene de todas maneras asta fin del año de [15]99, se continúan y aun acreçientan los gastos de manera que quando tuviera su hazienda libre, no hera posible sustentarse. Y para esto no es menester saber sino lo que yo sé: Que Su Magestad a de moderar sus gastos asta reforçarse algo.

Unos días más tarde, añadía estoicamente: «Aunque salgamos de este barranco, es fuerça mañana dar en otro pues caminamos cada día sobre más ynposibilidad».[872]

El camino hacia la bancarrota… de nuevo

Para cualquiera que hubiera vivido la crisis fiscal de 1574-1575, este lenguaje solo podía significar una cosa: otra bancarrota. Dado que «acá nos aogamos en dos de dos en agua» (según la descriptiva frase de Moura), el 13 de noviembre de 1596, «como el crédito está ya tan apurado y la carga de lo que se les debe [a los asentistas] es tan grande que monta 14.032.000 ducados», Felipe firmó por cuarta vez un decreto en virtud del cual confiscaba el capital de todos los prestamos pendientes y suspendía todos los pagos por intereses. Castilla se había convertido en la primera morosa en serie de la historia en deuda soberana.[873]

El decreto ocasionó el caos esperable. En España «se cerraron los cambios y cesó toda la contratación y se teme que había de estar la ruina de muchas casas de mercaderes»; mientras que, en los Países Bajos, los comandantes de Felipe recibieron nuevas órdenes:

> Si los [holandeses] rebeldes atacan, vos y los oficiales y soldados a vuestro cargo debéis hacer lo que se espera de hombres de honor; pero si os enfrentáis a una presión insoportable antes de que llegue el auxilio, os encargo y mando que, antes de sacrificaros vos mismo, aceptéis los mejores términos posibles.[874]

Cuando las Cortes enviaron una delegación para quejarse por esas injusticias, el rey volvió a responder con una

reprimenda:

> Su Magestad había respondido que le pesaba más que a nadie que sus necesidades hubiesen sido causa del dicho decreto sin poderlo excusar, y que si Su Magestad pudiera defender estos reynos con sola su persona, la aventurara; pero que, no siendo posible hacerse sin hacienda, y hallándose sin ninguna, había sido forzoso hacer el dicho decreto, y que también había sido alguna causa dello la dilación que el Reyno había tenido en lo que trataba de su servicio.[875]

Si Felipe esperaba que este reproche sirviera para persuadir a los procuradores «dificultosos» de que abandonaran las «condiciones indecentes» asociadas a su oferta de nuevos impuestos, se equivocaba, ya que estos se mantuvieron firmes. De modo que, en enero de 1597, el rey se vio obligado a conceder los restrictivos términos que le pedían. Pero todavía no fue bastante, porque las guerras seguían costando el doble de los ingresos. En las palabras expresivas de Moura, «quanto más tomamos, más tenemos que defender y más nos desean tomar», y mientras que Felipe volcaba sus recursos en Francia, un pequeño pero bien entrenado ejército holandés reconquistaba el noreste de los Países Bajos.[876]

Las dificultades de Felipe en la década de 1590 a la hora de conseguir tropas, barcos y los fondos para sostenerlos no eran del todo achacables a él. Un episodio de enfriamiento global trajo consigo un fuerte cambio climatológico. Según James Casey, «los años 1590 fueron una década de pésimo mal tiempo en España» y «las crónicas y registros de diezmos de Valencia y Murcia durante el periodo 1580-1630» revelaban «una serie excepcional de años lluviosos entre 1589 y 1598».[877] Andalucía también sufrió una secuencia inaudita de años extremadamente lluviosos entre 1590 y 1593, y de nuevo entre 1595 y 1597. Por contraste, Castilla sufría una sequía prolongada: los datos de los anillos de árboles de Navacerrada durante la década de 1590 revelan las precipitaciones anuales más bajas del pasado milenio. Simultáneamente, una epidemia de peste bubónica se propagó hacia el sur desde las ciudades

portuarias de Cantabria. Empezaron a circular refranes populares prediciendo el desastre —«Año de siete [1597], deja a España y vete»— y algunos súbditos de Felipe lamentaron abiertamente que «las cosas de España del todo van a rrebés de lo que solían […] consumiendo honrra y hazienda».[878]

La pobreza generalizada llevó a fray Diego de Yepes a enviarle a Felipe un contundente análisis de la situación que rozaba el chantaje espiritual, pues «las indisposiciones de Vuestra Magestad no dan lugar a que pueda io por presencia dezir algunas cosas», empezó el confesor, que «no puedo escusar de dezirlas por escrito, porque son las que deven dar más cuidado en tiempos semeiantes». Tras detallar ejemplos concretos de negligencia y corrupción en el gobierno, concluía:

> Considere Vuestra Magestad al trabaio, vigilancia y cuidado continuo que le a costado el gouierno dessos reinos para conservarlos en paz y justicia, y que todo a sido menester; y luego lo que se puede padecer de presente con los intervalos de sus enfermedades, y lo que sucederá destos intervalos, y quando estos reinos se vean del todo privados de la providencia de Vuestra Magestad. Y pues del gouierno, justicia y prosperidad dessos reinos depende la conservación de la fe católica y el augmento de la religión cristiana, lo qual todo fio y depositó Dios en las manos de Vuestra Magestad, sea servido de disponer las cosas de manera que el día de la quenta (que será presto) pueda con seguridad parecer en la presencia de Dios aviendo hecho todo lo que es de su parte.

Cuando, diez meses después, nada había mejorado, Yepes envió una severa advertencia en los mismos términos a Moura, avisándole de que entablar guerras y subir los impuestos en una época de escasez como aquella «es asolar el mundo»:

> Io no sé qué me haga. Dios por su clemencia me tenga de su mano, y guarde a V. S., a quien el mundo echa tanta culpa, como a mí. Io tenía pensado de escrevir a Su M[agesta]d suplicándole fuese servido de no dar lugar a esto de los millones, porque las violencias con que [el gobierno] los a procurado no justifican el servicio, especialmente que después de los sobornos, las prisiones, los destierros y los votos comprados a dicho que las condiciones con que se conceden no se an de cumplir […]. Suplico a Vuestra Señoría mire mucho en esto y lo advierta a Su Magestad, pues io no tengo dicha de podérselo decir ni escrevir.[879]

Tal derrotismo, junto con la noticia de que Isabel, Enrique IV y los holandeses habían firmado una triple alianza contra

España y buscaban coordinar sus ataques, convenció a Felipe y a sus ministros de confianza de que debían buscar la paz con sus enemigos. En primer lugar, acordaron un Medio General con los «decretados» (los banqueros afectados por el decreto de suspensión de pagos) en virtud del cual, a cambio de la reanudación de los intereses sobre el capital confiscado de sus anteriores préstamos, un consorcio de hombres de negocios firmó asientos por valor de siete millones de ducados para financiar una última campaña. También urgían a Alberto, gobernador general en los Países Bajos, para que iniciara negociaciones indirectas por la paz con Inglaterra. Primero, el rey ató de sus manos a su sobrino —«vos os governeys en la materia no çerrando la puerta a ella [la paz] ni tampoco abriéndola»—; pero más tarde le concedió amplios poderes, como había hecho en la primera mitad de su reinado: «Vos que teneys notiçia de todo sabreys sacar de cada uno el fructo que se pudiere, y pues todo os lo tengo remitido no ay más que dezir sino esperar aviso de lo que passare y se hiziere».[880] Felipe también aceptó una oferta papal de mediación para llegar a un acuerdo con Enrique IV de Francia, quien aceptó que la paz con España era la única forma de terminar con la guerra civil francesa y consolidar su posición. La Paz de Vervins, firmada el 2 de mayo de 1598, confirmó en gran parte los términos acordados en Cateau-Cambrésis treinta y nueve años antes, de manera que Felipe y sus ministros pudieron presentarlo como un éxito, dado que España perdía poco territorio.

El 6 de mayo, poco antes de que la noticia de la paz llegara a la corte, el rey aprobó las capitulaciones matrimoniales entre su hija mayor, Isabel Clara Eugenia, y su sobrino Alberto. Dos días más tarde, el rey y sus dos hijos supervivientes (Catalina Micaela había muerto el año anterior) firmaron un acta especial de cesión que limitaba el papel de España en los Países Bajos a la política exterior y la defensa, así como a los asuntos

matrimoniales: si Isabel Clara Eugenia moría sin descendencia antes que su hermano, este la sucedería; si Isabel tenía una hija, esta se casaría con el rey o príncipe de España; los herederos de los archiduques no podían celebrar matrimonio alguno sin el consentimiento de España. En agosto de 1598, en Bruselas, Alberto asumió el poder soberano de los Países Bajos en nombre de Isabel Clara Eugenia y partió hacia España para casarse con ella. De camino, se reunió con la esposa que el rey había elegido para su hijo y juntos llegaron a España. El rey siguió finalmente el consejo de su padre y repartió su herencia.

Para esposa de su único hijo y heredero, el rey solo se paró a considerar, como de costumbre, a otros miembros de la Casa de Austria. Por fin, eligió a las tres hijas casaderas de su primo el archiduque Carlos de Estiria, y solicitó los retratos de las tres (¡casi imposibles de distinguir entre sí!). Su primera elección, la mayor, murió casi inmediatamente, pero su madre se ofreció gustosa a enviar a las restantes a España para que Felipe pudiera elegir a una de ellas como su nuera y dejar a la otra en las Descalzas Reales. Para evitar más retrasos, Felipe eligió a la segunda, la archiduquesa Gregoria Maximiliana, y solicitó la dispensa papal necesaria «debido a la múltiple consanguinidad y grados de afinidad» existentes entre la pareja (ambos eran primos por parte de madre y de padre). El papa se la concedió, junto con otra dispensa para que Isabel Clara Eugenia se casara con su primo Alberto. Pero entonces la archiduquesa también murió, y Felipe tuvo que solicitar otra dispensa idéntica para que su hijo pudiera casarse finalmente con la única hermana que quedaba, Margarita, que entonces tenía trece años de edad. El papa volvió a acceder; Margarita se casó en 1599, y viviría lo bastante para ser madre de cinco hijos que llegaron a la edad adulta.[881]

«Mis hijos y mis nietos»

Aunque Felipe murió antes de la boda de su hijo, ya tenía nietos. En abril de 1588, Felipe felicitó a su hija Catalina porque «bueno ha sido haber tenido tres y tan buenos [hijos] en tres años, que hizo ayer que os velastéis y esta noche pasada que comenzastéis aquel oficio que debéis saber tan bien como se ve por la experiencia que hay de ello», una referencia sorprendentemente vulgar a la vida sexual de su hija. Al año siguiente, Felipe recibió no solo las descripciones de los nuevos miembros de su familia, sino también sus retratos. «Con lo que me decís de mis nietos he holgado mucho», aunque «más holgaría de veros a vos y a ellos, que no podrían dejar de darme mucho gusto con sus travesuras», un comentario que no deja de resultar curioso, teniendo en cuenta el poco interés que Felipe parece haber mostrado en las «travesuras» de sus propios hijos. Pero su amor por Catalina era sincero y profundo, y, cuando en 1597 llegó la noticia de que había muerto al dar a luz, lloró, gritó y se entristeció tanto que uno de los monjes de El Escorial creía que «ansí le quitó muchos días de vida y salud».[882]

El amor del rey por Isabel, su hija mayor, era idéntico. A partir de 1585, después de que Catalina abandonara España, ella estaba «muy de ordinario con Su Magestad», visitándolo «todos los días después de comer», viajando con él y, en algunas ocasiones, firmando cartas en su nombre cuando la artritis le impedía hacerlo de su propia mano.[883] Resultó curioso, entonces, el cruel destino que el rey planeaba para su hija mayor «si no se hallare casada al tiempo de mi fallezçimiento». Según un codicilo secreto a su testamento de marzo de 1594, «declaro y ordeno que en tal caso ella pueda eligir para su habitación, hasta tanto que se case, o el Alcáçar de Segovia o la casa de Tordesillas como más fuere su voluntad». Aunque el rey pasaba a continuación a alabar la «gran virtud y partes de que Dios le ha dotado», y afirmaba que su matrimonio era «cosa que yo tanto he deseado y procurado, y en que continuamente

entiendo con el cuydado y amor que a tal hija tengo y devo», había decidido exiliarla de Madrid, donde vivían sus únicos parientes (su hermano Felipe en la corte, y su tía María y su prima Margarita en las Descalzas Reales). Sus únicas opciones eran el alcázar donde Lupercio Latrás (y otros muchos) habían sido encarcelados y ejecutados, o la casa donde su bisabuela Juana había languidecido bajo guardia durante medio siglo. Aunque el hecho de que Felipe viviera cuatro años más salvó a Isabel de este destino, el decreto mostraba una extraordinaria falta de sensibilidad hacia una hija «a quien tan tiernamente quiero por lo mucho que merece y la gran compañía que me ha hecho».[884]

Los planes de Felipe para el príncipe de Asturias eran más convencionales y reflejaban su experiencia con su primer heredero, don Carlos. Cuando en 1585 creó una Casa para el príncipe Felipe, entonces de siete años, el nuevo ayo, don Juan de Zúñiga —hijo menor y homónimo del exigente ayo del rey —, recordó al rey «que he visto el daño que ha resultado de los bandos que se ha levantado en casa de los príncipes» pasados, por lo que «conviene que los criados de Su Alteza fuesen muy conjuntos con su ayo en amistad, que no pudiese haber en esto peligro».[885] Por eso el rey insistía en que, en la elección de los sirvientes del príncipe, la lealtad debía anteponerse al talento. El maestro del príncipe, García de Loaysa Girón, ejemplificaba la leal mediocridad que prefería Felipe para su heredero. Al enterarse de su nombramiento, alguien que decía haber sido «íntimo y aficcionado seruidor» de Loaysa durante treinta años se lamentó de que «aunque son muchas cosas las que sabe, no son pocas las que ignora». Entre las primeras incluía las

> lenguas, mathemáticas, astrología, lógica, philosophía, methafísica, theología de la Complutense; mas juntamente con esto, ignora mill cossas. Jamás supo hablar con muger en buena ni en mala parte, ni tomar los naypes en las manos, ni cerrar la bolsa ni la puerta de su casa a los pobres […] ni sauía en Alcalá más calles que de su cassa hasta la yglesia y escuelas.[886]

¡El autor no podía haber identificado mejor las habilidades que Felipe no quería que aprendiera su heredero! Hablar con mujeres, jugar a los naipes y ser espabilado (especialmente en Alcalá) eran precisamente los vicios que, a juicio del rey, habían llevado a la perdición a don Carlos.

Pero ¿tal vez erraba Felipe? El hecho de rodear a su hijo de criados valiosos pero aburridos, y leales al rey por encima de todo, jugó unos años más tarde a favor de un cortesano que, a la vez que brillante, parecía profesar verdadera lealtad por él: don Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, conde de Lerma y marqués de Denia; pero esto sucedería años después. Por el momento, la pedagogía de Loaysa producía admirables resultados. En 1594, el príncipe empezó a firmar, «Yo el príncipe» y debajo firmaba el secretario, «Por mandado de Su Magestad, y Su Alteza en su nombre» en cédulas y cartas de todo tipo. Tres años más tarde, según el nuncio, «el príncipe está ya introducido en el gobierno» y «cada día da mayores muestras de discreción y valor». Todo esto, concluyó, «promete un gran nuevo siglo de oro». No obstante, apuntaba el nuncio agudamente, aunque el príncipe firmara los despachos, «todos serán por orden de Su Majestad, de modo que habrá poca o ninguna alteración o diferencia de la firma del príncipe a la estampilla que se usaba con el nombre del rey»; y cuando el rey estaba enfermo, Moura actuaba como el «árbitro de los negocios de todos sus reinos, de sus consejos, de sus ejércitos, de sus armadas, de sus ministros, de su Hacienda».[887]

Felipe hizo todo lo posible por asegurar la continuidad después de su muerte. «Yo me hallo bien con don Cristóbal de Moura», le escribió a su hijo durante su última enfermedad, «y con los demás que traigo a mi lado en negocios», esto es, la Junta de Gobierno. También repitió el consejo que él había recibido de su propio padre:

> Un príncipe como vos se ha de servir de todos y de cada uno en su oficio, sin

sujetaros a nadie ni dejaros gobernar conocidamente de ninguno, sino oíd a muchos y reservar el secreto necesario a cada uno, para hacer elección de lo mejor con libertad, como dueño y cabeza de todos; y esto os dará reputación, y lo contrario os la quitará; pues en lugar de mandar, que es vuestro oficio, seréis mandado por falta de resistencia para haceros respetar. Y tomad de mí este consejo, y tened por cierto que cada día iréis echando de ver cuán bien os irá con él.[888]

Como de costumbre, el rey prefería escribir a hablar, por lo que ya había redactado dos papeles de consejos para su hijo. Uno era «una plática que san Luys [rey] de Francia hizo a la hora de su muerte a su hijo» tres siglos antes: Felipe lo transcribió de su puño y letra y se lo dio a su confesor, con orden de entregárselo a su hijo después de su muerte. La mayoría de los consejos se referían a la fe (amar a Dios y evitar el pecado; confesarse con frecuencia; promover la fe católica y obedecer al papa; asistir a misa y escuchar los sermones con regularidad) y a la justicia (el príncipe no debía hablar ni dejar que le hablaran mal de otros, permitir ninguna blasfemia y sí mantener la ley y favorecer a los pobres). Muchos de los demás mandamientos de san Luis coincidían con la visión basada en la fe del propio Felipe: «Si pensaredes de hazer alguna cosa de importancia, reveladla a vuestro confessor o a algún varón docto y de buena vida, para que veáys lo que conuiene hazer»; «cuando os sucedieren aduersidades, sufrildas con buen ánimo y pensad que los tenéys bien merecidas, y assí os serán gran ganancia»; «no haréys guerra, especialmente contra cristianos, sin gran consejo y causa»; «procurad, quanto en vos fuere, los medios de paz».[889]

Felipe guardaba su segundo papel de consejos, junto con el crucifijo de sus padres y algunos otros objetos de devoción, en un «cofrecito» especial. Poco antes de morir sacó un «papel que allí avía y dándosele al príncipe le dixo: "Aí verás el modo con que ayas de gobernar tu reyno"». Este documento empezaba refiriéndose a las especiales necesidades de sus súbditos

portugueses y a los nuevos procedimientos seguidos por la Cámara de Castilla; pero sus cláusulas principales trataban de atarle las manos a su hijo, aunque tenía veinte años, recordándole:

> Que con el amor de padre que tanto le ama y tanto dessea que açierte, y la experiençia que tengo de todos los hombres que le queden, le he declarado de palabra, entre otras cosas, qué personas hallo yo dignas de hinchir este lugar, de quien pueda fiarse, y servirse y ayudarse para el bien destos reynos. Le acuerdo y advierto aquí que tenga muy en la memoria lo que assí le he dicho de palabra, y crea que se hallara bien dello.[890]

Ninguno de los papeles de Felipe de cómo «ayas de gobernar tu reyno» contenían el tipo de instrucción que medio siglo antes Carlos V le había dado a él; pero esto no resulta sorprendente porque, tanto en 1543 como en 1548, Carlos los escribió cuando se encontraba lejos y temía morir pronto. Felipe y su hijo, en cambio, vivían bajo el mismo techo, y el rey se refería explícitamente a «lo que assí le he dicho de palabra»; y sin duda contaba con darle más consejos de palabra más adelante. No necesitaba decírselo todo por escrito.

De Madrid al purgatorio, pasando por San Lorenzo

En mayo de 1597 Felipe cumplió setenta años y, como la mayoría de los septuagenarios, pasaba la mayor parte del tiempo enfermo o durmiendo, y en cualquier cosa invertía mucho más tiempo que hasta entonces. «Su Majestad se levanta cada día antes de comer y se acuesta después de cenar», comentaba el marqués de Velada. En 1597 el viaje desde Madrid a El Escorial, que antes había hecho a caballo en un solo día, le llevó casi un mes, debido a varias paradas de «algunos días», y, nada más llegar, el rey «hubo de ir directamente al lecho de enfermo».[891]

Cualquier contratiempo en la salud del viejo monarca sembraba la alarma en la corte, porque, en palabras de un cortesano, en cuanto él muriera todos se encontrarían ante un

nuevo escenario y «los personajes de esta comedia serán completamente nuevos». Cuando Felipe «nos deje», continuaba, «otra era comenzará y nosotros no sabemos qué pasará». El príncipe de Asturias no dejaba ninguna duda al respecto. Durante la fiesta de San Juan de 1598, llevó al futuro duque de Lerma con él «a ver correr los toros en la plaça mayor desta villa» de Madrid y juntos asistieron a la corrida desde «las ventanas de la Casa Nueba de la Panadería que se ha hecho en esta villa». Todos pudieron ver que Lerma «estubo arrimado a la silla de Su Alteza» durante todo «el tiempo que duró el correr de los toros», dejando «a los demás grandes en las ventanas».[892] La incertidumbre entre los demás ministros ante el futuro paralizaba los asuntos de la monarquía. Como señaló el marqués de Velada, «como en consejo les pareçe que aora no se le puede dar quenta de todo [al rey], procúranlo todo entretener y dilatar»; además, «el príncipe nuestro señor manda y resuelve lo que se ha de hazer, pero en vida de su padre va con mucho respeto y moderaçión».[893]

Pero ¿cuánto tiempo continuaría esta incertidumbre? Pocos días después de la fiesta de San Juan, aunque sus médicos le aconsejaron descansar, Felipe salió por última vez de Madrid, «muy apercebido y prevenido para irse a morir a su Real Casa de San Lorenzo», donde, según afirmaba fray José de Sigüenza, hacía mucho tiempo había decidido que estaría «su gloriosa sepultura». El rey se desplazó hasta allí «en silla, como le trahen por palacio, la cual llevavan quatro lacayos, uno de cada parte», y, para evitar el intenso calor, solo viajaban a partir del atardecer. Esta vez, en lugar de descansar después de su llegada, Felipe pidió inmediatamente que le llevaran «en su silla [por] toda la casa y monasterio de arriba abaxo sin dexar de ver cosa ninguna, lo qual espanta de ver tan repentinas mudanças en su salud trahe a los médicos desalumbrados».[894] Poco después, el 22 de julio de 1598, Felipe quedó ya postrado en cama, pero

siguió por algunas semanas despachando asuntos. Nombró a varios prelados para los cargos vacantes; concedió generosas recompensas a sus fieles criados; cubrió varios de los puestos de la casa de su futura nuera, Margarita; perdonó a algunos presos; hizo algunos actos caritativos relacionados con las Alteraciones de Aragón e, incluso (sorprendentemente), ordenó que «a la muger de Antonio Pérez, con que se meta recojida en un monasterio, la suelten [del cárcel], y se le vuelva la hazienda que le toca, y sus hijos hereden la parte della».[895]

El 17 de agosto, aunque con gran dolor e incontinencia, Felipe incluso concedió una audiencia al nuncio Caetani: «Le encontré en el lecho, inmóvil y con extrema flaqueza, pero con los sentidos vivacísimos y con una serenidad de rostro y compostura de ánimo admirable». El nuncio invitó primero a Felipe a «pedir perdón de todas sus faltas, culpas e imperfecciones en las que como hombre hubiese incurrido, por malas y falsas informaciones y consejos» (¿una referencia tal vez al asesinato de Escobedo?). Luego, se aprovechó descaradamente de su ventaja para ofrecerle, como rey, importantes beneficios espirituales a cambio de que cediera respecto a la disputa sobre la jurisdicción papal en sus dominios *(véase capítulo 5)*:

> Suplicaba a su Majestad solamente una cosa para quitar todos los impedimentos y escrúpulos que pudiese albergar: y es que hiciese propósito firme de querer asentar y dejar resuelto este negocio de la jurisdicción en todos sus reinos y estados, y que se diese a la Iglesia aquello que verdaderamente era suyo, y comunicase este propósito a su hijo el príncipe.

Pese al dolor, su temor al purgatorio y la ignominia de yacer en un lecho entre sus propios excrementos, Felipe rechazó tajantemente este claro intento de chantaje por parte del nuncio:

> Me respondió su Majestad con rostro riente y ánimo intrépido, que se había alegrado grandísimamente de mi venida; que su mal era grave y estaba dispuestísimo a morir y a entregarse a la voluntad de Dios sobre vida o muerte, y no pretendía otra cosa sino morir en su gracia e impetrar perdón de sus pecados

[…]. Que estaba resuelto a asentar estos asuntos de jurisdicción, que su intención había sido siempre que se tuviese respecto y reverencia a la Iglesia y a la Sede Apostólica, y lo mismo haría el príncipe, y que se lo recordaría.

«Hasta este momento», seguía relatando el nuncio, «entendí todas sus palabras, porque se esforzó en hablar fuerte y claro». Pero, poco a poco, a Felipe se le fueron acabando las fuerzas: «Añadió a este último punto muchas otras palabras, que yo perdí porque le faltó vigor y las dijo con un son confuso y oscuro». Pero Felipe seguía consciente, y dos días después de la audiencia firmó un papel en el que expresaba su deseo de «ver bien compuesto» las «competencias entre las jurisdiçiones eclesiásticas y seglar». Sin embargo, en lugar de ceder terreno, como el nuncio había pedido, proponía que el papa y él pusieran «cada cosa en su lugar por medio de personas graves de sçiençia y conçiençia que desapassionadamente aclaren lo que a cada una de las partes pertenece». Y, «si Nuestro Señor dispusiere de mi antes que lo pueda executar, encreçidamente encargo y mando al príncipe mi hijo que lo lleve adelante, advertiendo a no consentir que sea perjudicada la jurisdición real en lo que de verdad le toca». De este modo Felipe se atenía fielmente a las instrucciones de su padre, recibidas justo cincuenta años antes: aunque cumplía con «la sumisión que un buen hijo de la Iglesia lo debe hacer, y sin dar a los papas justa causa de mal contentamiento vuestro […] no se haga ni intente cosa prejudicial a las preeminencias y común bien y quietud de los dichos reinos».[896] Su reacción constituye una contundente muestra de la férrea determinación de Felipe aun en sus últimos momentos.

El 1 de septiembre, Felipe firmó un documento concediendo permiso para el desposorio de Isabel Clara Eugenia; ese sería su último acto como rey. Continuó postrado en el lecho y sufriendo incontinencia en su pequeño estudio de El Escorial, incapaz de moverse y de soportar que le tocaran,

porque se le desarrollaron terribles llagas. A veces los médicos le causaban tan grandes dolores mientras las curaban que «dijo en voz alta que no lo podía soportar de ninguna de las maneras del mundo». También pedía «que se parasen un poco, y otras veces que le trataran con mayor delicadeza, y acomodaran sus acciones al sufrimiento que soportaba y a todos sus demás padecimientos y dolores». En cierto momento anunció «que iba a morir en sus manos, y "esto os lo digo —añadió— para que estéis advertido"». Lhermite consideraba todo ello «signo muy evidente del insoportable tormento que sufría», y añadía:

> Los malos olores que despedían estas llagas eran para él otra especie de tormento, y ciertamente no de los más livianos, dadas la pulcritud y limpieza con las que siempre había vivido este príncipe, tormento agravado además por tener toda la espalda y los costados abiertos y ulcerosos, debido a no haber podido volverse de un lado en ningún momento de su enfermedad.[897]

Aunque no podía moverse, el rey aún podía ver y escuchar, y sus devociones durante sus últimos días resultan altamente reveladoras respecto a su fe personal. Guiado por su confesor, Felipe estudió ciertos pasajes de la Biblia (especialmente los Salmos y algunos fragmentos del Evangelio que enfatizaban el perdón: la redención de María Magdalena, el regreso del Hijo Pródigo, el perdón del Buen Ladrón en la cruz) y las obras espirituales de dos vasallos suyos: el español fray Luis de Granada y el flamenco Ludovico Blosio. Tanto Isabel como Yepes le leían extractos de las obras de Blosio, y el rey los repetía, a menudo hasta tres veces seguidas, principalmente los pasajes sobre cómo el sufrimiento humano y la pasión de Cristo pueden redimir a los pecadores penitentes. El sufrimiento en la vida terrena, sugería Blosio, no solo reducía las ocasiones de pecar, sino también los castigos a los pecadores en la vida eterna. Tal vez la intensa y repetida meditación sobre estos pasajes ayudara al rey a sobrellevar los constantes dolores.

Felipe también encontró consuelo espiritual en las imágenes. Aunque hoy en día su aposento de San Lorenzo está

desnudo, durante su última enfermedad, el rey «tenía a todos los lados de la cama y por las paredes de su dormitorio crucifijos e imágenes». Su devoción por ellas queda puesta de manifiesto por una anécdota relatada por Lhermite: «Estando Su Majestad un día enfermo en la cama y entrándole ganas de hacer sus necesidades, antes de coger el orinal, me mandó cubrir con una cortina una imagen muy devota de un Ecce Homo y otra de Nuestra Señora que estaban colgadas cerca de su cama». La preocupación de Felipe revelaba su creencia en que estas imágenes eran capaces de experimentar lo que acontecía en torno a ellas; como Carlos Eire ha señalado: «Para él eran testigos y compañeros callados y sobrenaturales».[898] Lo mismo puede decirse, *a fortiori*, de las 7.422 reliquias que el rey había llegado a reunir en El Escorial, de las cuales Sigüenza y sus colegas cada día hacían una selección diferente para llevarlas junto a su lecho, desde donde él las veneraba y besaba y hacía que se las colocaran sobre sus llagas. Un día, tras haber pedido «un gran aparador de estos vasos del cielo», el guardián «pieza por pieza se las llevó todas para que las adorase y besase. Entendió que ya no faltaba ninguna, y quería tornarlas a su lugar y relicario, y díjole: "¡Mirad que la reliquia de tal santo se os olvida, que no me habéis dado a besar!"». Cuando el dolor o el agotamiento le hacían perder el conocimiento, la infanta descubrió que la única forma de despertar a su padre era diciendo en voz alta «"¡No toquéis en las reliquias!", fingiendo que llegaba a ellas alguno, y luego el Rey abría los ojos».[899]

Además de esto, el rey continuaba con sus habituales devociones. Desde su lecho de enfermo seguía los oficios religiosos celebrados en el altar mayor de la basílica y pedía que le rociaran con agua bendita la cara y el cuerpo, confiado en la doctrina de la Iglesia de que así podían lavarse los pecados veniales. También pasaba mucho tiempo escuchando a sus predicadores preferidos (y, cuando estos se cansaban, les

ordenaba: «Padres, ¡decidme más!»). Por otra parte, se confesaba regularmente (en cierta ocasión pasó tres días repasando, al parecer, los pecados de toda su vida); recibió la extremaunción dos veces; y tomó la comunión hasta que sus médicos le advirtieron de que ya no podía tragar la Sagrada Hostia.

Felipe había rezado para estar plenamente consciente en los últimos momentos de su vida, y sus plegarias fueron escuchadas. En la noche del 12 de septiembre, sufrió un paroxismo tan fuerte que los que se encontraban junto a su lecho dijeron que «como muerto lo tuvimos, pero repentinamente abrió los ojos con una vivacidad desacostumbrada». Entonces empezó a reírse bajito, dándose cuenta de que iba a morir completamente consciente. Pidió el crucifijo de sus padres «y lo cogió con tal fervor y devoción» que todos quedaron sorprendidos. Luego, «lo besó varias veces y después cogió también un cirio bendito de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat en cuyo extremo estaba la imagen de esta misma virgen, y lo besó también». Durante dos horas «se fue acabando poco a poco» mientras permanecía concentrado en el crucifijo y la vela. A las cinco de la mañana del 13 de septiembre de 1598, «cuando el alba rompía por el Oriente» y «estando cantando misa del alba los niños del seminario», Lhermite, Sigüenza y las demás personas que se hallaban presentes vieron cómo «con un pequeño movimiento, dando dos o tres boqueadas, salió aquella santa alma y se fue, según lo dicen tantas pruebas, a gozar del Reino soberano».[900]

A rey muerto, rey puesto

Rememorando en 1605 la muerte del rey, Sigüenza invocaba la ya popular afirmación de que Felipe había gobernado un «imperio en que no se ponía el sol»:

> Con la nueva venida de la luz en el felicísimo día en que ella comenzó, que fue domingo, comenzó también el nuevo rey; y entró gobernando el más extendido

Imperio que el sol ha visto, pues si pudiera llevar las carta y el aviso, desde el punto por donde descubrió sus rayos hasta que rematara el círculo volviendo al mismo punto, hallara vasallos propios a quien darlas.[901]

En todas partes los «vasallos propios» del difunto rey se vistieron de luto. En Bruselas las honras fúnebres tuvieron lugar el 29 de diciembre, fecha en que se cumplía el cuarenta aniversario de las celebradas allí también en honor de Carlos V; en Nueva España y Filipinas (como no podía ser menos, dado el apoyo que Felipe había prestado durante toda su vida al Santo Oficio), la Inquisición se encargó de organizar las exequias reales. Muchos de los aliados de España celebraron a su vez espléndidas conmemoraciones. En Florencia, el gran duque encargó a un grupo de pintores un impresionante programa iconográfico, que incluía veinticuatro lienzos en los que se narraban diferentes episodios de la vida del rey; mientras que, en Roma, Clemente VIII elogió que el difunto rey jamás hubiese querido consentir la libertad de conciencia.

Y porque quiso reduzir a la fe cathólica, y a la obediencia de esta santa silla, los vassallos también de otros, empeñó todo su patrimonio real, y gastó en esta obra los grandes tesoros que de las Indias le traýan, y tantas dádiuas que sacó de los reynos de Castilla en tantos años que reynó. De donde se puede dezir, que toda la vida del rey fue vna continua pelea contra los enemigos de la santa fe.[902]

En los reinos de Castilla, algunos no sentían tanto entusiasmo por la «continua pelea» sufragada con «tantas dádiuas». Incluso, a muchos madrileños les preocupaba el coste que la muerte de Felipe les podría acarrear —«con la muerte de Su Magestad, que se dice por muy cierta, haremos lutos que nos costarán los ojos»— y, como cabía esperar, nada más conocerse la noticia del fallecimiento del rey, tan solo seis horas después de producirse el hecho, el ayuntamiento ordenó

que todas las personas, de cualquier estado y calidad que sean, se pongan lutos por la muerte del rey nuestro señor, que está en gloria, dentro de tercero día, y las mujeres se pongan tocas negras, y no traigan vestido de seda; y él que no pudiese traer luto ni caperuza se ponga sombrero sin toquela, en señal de tristeza.[903]

Dado que Felipe III ya era príncipe jurado, su sucesión fue

automática, y el 11 de octubre en Madrid «se alçó el pendón en esta villa por el rey». Una semana después, el flamante soberano, vestido de negro y encapuchado, presidió durante dos días las honras fúnebres celebradas en San Jerónimo en torno al enorme túmulo erigido de forma similar al de San Lorenzo de El Escorial e iluminado por un millar de cirios de gran tamaño.

Según Carlos Eire, «la muerte de ningún otro monarca o figura pública de principios de la historia moderna europea despertó nunca tanta atención como la de Felipe II», afirmación para la que se basó en la supervivencia de más de cuarenta sermones funerarios impresos y en las descripciones de las honras fúnebres locales. Salamanca celebró «justas poéticas» para conmemorar la muerte del rey, con premios para el epigrama en latín y el soneto en español que mejor ensalzaran los logros del difunto rey.[904] Pero pocas ciudades podían permitirse semejante boato. En Palencia, el consistorio se enteró de la muerte del rey el 25 de septiembre, y decidió que todos sus ciudadanos debían guardar luto. Al igual que en Madrid, «los que no pudieren, ny tuvieren posibilidad, traygan sombrero sin toquilla», pero, en vista de la pobreza generalizada, los regidores de Palencia añadieron una categoría adicional: aquellos que no pudieran pagarse un sombrero «traygan tocas negras sobre su cabeza».[905] En Cádiz, que todavía estaba recuperándose del «estrago y daño que el armada ynglesa» hizo, el ayuntamiento trataba «de donde se puede proveer de dinero para cumplir con la obligación que se tiene de poner lutos y hazer las onras», y se esforzó en buscar dinero para comprar el damasco con el que confeccionar «el estandarte que se a de hazer por la nueva asessión del reyno». Resolvió reciclar «la madera del túmulo que se hizo […] para el teatro que se hizo […] para alçar el pendón» de su sucesor. Pero cuando la madera «se ponga en pregón, para que si alguna

persona quisiere hazer beneficio en ella […] no a parecido perssona que lo ponga». Como último recurso, «se a hecho instancia con unos carpinteros para que lo compren», pero era tal la pobreza imperante que «no an querido dar un maravedí para él».[906]

Solo Sevilla hizo honras fúnebres que rivalizaban con las de Madrid. Cuando llegó la noticia de la muerte de Felipe, el ayuntamiento determinó «hacer la mayor demostración que jamás se haya hecho en los lutos y en las honras»; y la ciudad se llenó de reposteros, flámulas y banderas negras, elevándose de tal modo el precio de la bayeta negra que los regidores tuvieron que tasar estas mercaderías. Un magnífico túmulo, a semejanza —como se hizo en Madrid— del de San Lorenzo de El Escorial e iluminado con 2.320 velas, se instaló en la nave central de la catedral, oscurecida a fin de concentrar la atención sobre él, cuando el 26 de noviembre el clero, los regidores, jueces e inquisidores de la ciudad desfilaron ante él para participar en las honras. A medida que sus ojos fueron acostumbrándose a la luz, los diferentes grupos de dignatarios apreciaron sutiles diferencias en la calidad y cantidad del paño asignado a cada banco. Las discusiones sobre la asignación de los asientos fueron subiendo de tono hasta que, en mitad de la solemne misa de réquiem, los inquisidores excomulgaron a los regidores por no consentir en abandonar sus asientos, de superior categoría. La ceremonia concluyó en un caos. Al final, el Consejo Real tuvo que dirimir las disputas sobre las precedencias para que Sevilla pudiera repetir, con la solemnidad requerida, su conmemoración a finales de diciembre. Esta vez todo transcurría sin incidentes hasta que un «poeta fanfarrón» de la localidad recitó un soneto con estrambote, *Al túmulo del rey Felipe II en Sevilla*, que escandalizó a los asistentes:

¡Voto a Dios! que me espanta esta grandeza
y que diera un doblón por describilla;
porque ¿a quién no sorprende y maravilla
esta máquina insigne, esta riqueza?
¡Por Jesucristo vivo! cada pieza
vale más de un millón, y que es mancilla
que esto no dure un siglo, ¡oh gran Sevilla!,
Roma triunfante en ánimo y nobleza.
Apostaré que el ánima del muerto
por gozar este sitio hoy ha dejado
la gloria donde vive eternamente.
Esto oyó un valentón, y dijo: «Es cierto
cuanto dice voacé, señor soldado.
Y él que dijere lo contrario, miente».
Y luego, incontinente,
caló el chapeo, requirió la espada,
miró al soslayo, fuese, y no hubo nada.[907]

El escándalo obedecía no solo a la blasfemia que suponía jurar dentro de un templo, sino al sarcasmo general sobre la cantidad de dinero gastado en estos fastos: «Me espanta esta grandeza», «diera un doblón por describilla», la sugerencia de que «cada pieza» del efímero túmulo de madera y cartón «vale más de un millón». Y, por si fuera poco, el poema era escatológico: el término «incontinente» recordaba a todos las evacuaciones del rey, descritas en todas las crónicas sobre su agonía final.[908] Sin embargo, el «poeta fanfarrón» sabía por experiencia lo que significaba ser un «señor soldado» del difunto rey: se trataba de Miguel de Cervantes.

Muchos otros españoles, hombres y mujeres, criticaron amargamente al difunto rey. Dos días después de su muerte, la piadosa Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza le explicaba a un amigo:

«El rey murió ayer. Hartas novedades habrá con el nuevo. Dios le dé su gracia para bien de su Iglesia, y para que no dé con todo al traste; que son los tiempos peligrosos». Al mes siguiente, Íñigo Ibáñez de Santa Cruz, secretario del marqués de Denia (por entonces privado del rey, y que pronto se convertiría en duque de Lerma), escribió una completa guía de «las causas de que resultó el ignorante y confuso gouierno que hubo en el tiempo del rey nuestro señor, el señor don Phelipe II, que sea en gloria». Ibáñez no solo arremetía contra el excesivo coste de la política exterior de Felipe («30 millones en los pantanos de Flandes» y «otra tanta cantidad» en las infructuosas guerras contra Francia e Inglaterra), sino también contra su adicción a las «menudencias»: era uno de «los hombres [que] sepan mucho en lo poco y que totalmente ignoren lo mucho». También ridiculizaba los hábitos personales del difunto rey —«amigo de mugeres y pinturas, jardines sumptuosos, grandes edificios, aposentos curiosos» y con «mucha voluntad a perfumes y olores aromáticos y otros femeninos adornos»— y su supuesta dependencia de ministros mediocres, como Mateo Vázquez y don Cristóbal de Moura. «Oh desdichada España y desdichada monarquía», concluía Ibáñez, «pues así se ha perdido, acabado y consumido con este tan ciego gobierno».[909]

Aquel mismo mes, Baltasar Álamos de Barrientos, un aliado de Antonio Pérez, redactó un devastador *Discurso al rey nuestro señor del estado que tienen sus reynos* en el que casi parodiaba el testamento político de Carlos V, escrito justo medio siglo antes *(véase capítulo 2)*. Álamos de Barrientos ponía de manifiesto la hostilidad de casi todos los vecinos de la monarquía. Francia, aunque ahora estuviera en paz, contaba con un monarca poderoso que gobernaba sobre un Estado unificado y trataba de aprovechar cualquier ocasión para promover una guerra en Italia que debilitara aún más a España. El inveterado odio de Inglaterra le había llevado a apoyar a los rebeldes contra

España, entrometerse en las Américas e incluso lanzar ataques directos sobre la península. A los Estados independientes de Italia y al papa les molestaba el dominio de España y deseaban que llegara su fin. A continuación, Álamos describía pormenorizadamente el descontento de los propios súbditos del nuevo rey, así como la abierta rebelión en el norte de los Países Bajos, el vehemente sentimiento antiespañol en el sur, y el malestar en Portugal, la Italia española, Aragón y las Américas. De este modo, Castilla tenía que cargar con todo, pero «las ciudades y villas grandes de estos reinos están faltas de gente, y las aldeas menores despoblados del todo, y los campos sin hallar apenas ya quien los labre; y para cobrar un real de tributo, se pierden y gastan ciento en los cobradores y modo con que lo hacen». Así pues, proseguía Álamos, «no hay lugar que esté libre desta miseria, y con la riqueza y abundancia que solían, procediendo este daño principalmente de la grandeza y paga de los tributos, y de gastarse lo procedido de estos en guerras extranjeras».[910]

En el coro de voces críticas no faltaban las de ciertos clérigos, empezando con algunos sermones pronunciados durante las honras fúnebres del difunto monarca. En noviembre de 1598, fray Lorenzo de Ayala, al predicar en Valladolid, lugar de nacimiento del difunto monarca, notaba:

> Murió el Católico Rey don Felipe: esto amenazaua la sequedad larga de casi nueve meses continuos; esto pronosticaua el auer la tierra quebrado, como mal mercader, y alçádose con los necessarios mantenimientos, de que ay tanta falta en Castilla; esto profetizaua el auer rompido banco de salud de tantas partes del reyno, y auer dado passo franco a la pestilencia en tantos lugares.

«Todos estos sucesos», continuaba, eran «aposentadores que con vara alçada apercebían posada al mayor de los daños, que desde que nuestro patriarca Túbal, nieto de Noé, pobló las Españas, en ellas se ha recibido». Unos meses más tarde, el jesuita Juan de Mariana publicó un tratado político que incluía una notable sección en la que, explícitamente, atribuía el

fracaso de la Armada a los pecados de su creador:

> Sufrimos la gran pérdida de una numerosa armada en las aguas inglesas, recibiendo tal castigo e ignominia, que en mucho tiempo no pudimos perder la memoria de ella: semejante venganza solo tiene por causa los delitos graves y crímenes que había cometido nuestro pueblo: y si el entendimiento no me engaña, las mal ocultas liviandades de cierto príncipe también irritaron al cielo, porque entonces la fama divulgaba que el príncipe, olvidado de su persona sagrada, y no acordándose de su edad avanzada, y que pisaba ya los bordes de la tumba, se había entregado desordenadamente y sin pudor al vicio de la lascivia.

En 1600, Martín González de Cellorigo, un abogado que trabajaba para la Inquisición, publicó un *Memorial de la política necesaria y útil restauración a la República de España*, en el que sostenía que la Monarquía española «ha llegado al tiempo que todos juzgamos por de peor condición que los pasados», y, quizá por primera vez, se refería explícitamente a su «declinación».[911]

Incluso algunos de los más estrechos colaboradores del difunto rey se mostraron entonces críticos. Dos semanas después de la muerte de Felipe, el embajador de Venecia afirmaba que el adelantado mayor de Castilla, don Martín de Padilla, capitán general del mar, «declara que el mundo vería lo que los españoles eran capaces de hacer, ahora que tenían las manos libres y ya no estaban supeditados a una sola cabeza que creía saberlo todo y trataba a todos los demás como si fueran unos torpes». Padilla adoptaba prácticamente el mismo tono cuando compartía sus críticas directamente con el nuevo rey:

> Me lastima ver que, respecto de no hazer gastos, se emprenden jornadas con tan poca fuerza que sirve más de yrritar los enemigos que de castigarlos; y lo peor es que, por bien que diga, se perpetuan las guerras y viene a ser el gasto ynumerable, y los travajos que proceden de guerras largas, sin quenta.

La sensación de desengaño parecía tan generalizada que, según Henry Kamen, «podemos, creo yo, con buena razón hablar de una "generación de 1598"».[912]

Del purgatorio al paraíso

Sin embargo, no todos los españoles compartían ese pesimismo.

El marqués de Velada, uno de los testigos presenciales, no albergaba ninguna duda de que «Su Majestad acavó como un santo esta mañana»; mientras que otro testigo escribió que «es muy de creer que con tal vida y tal muerte podemos contar a su Majestad por un santo».[913] Poco después, «algunos varones santos, por revelación diuina, vieron entrar en el cielo el alma del prudentísimo rey después de aver estado en el purgatorio», pero, lamentablemente, los varones santos no coincidían en cuanto al momento en que ocurrió. Un carmelita de noble cuna afirmaba que sucedió solo a los ocho días; mientras que una doncella de Manresa dijo haber visto la ascensión del alma del rey exactamente catorce días después de su muerte. Cinco años más tarde, en Marchena, sor María de la Antigua tuvo una visión durante tres domingos consecutivos en la que aparecía un «fuego» en el cielo que, según afirmaba, «todo el mundo vio»; pero no supo su significado hasta más tarde, al conocer la visión de fray Julián de San Agustín (o Alcalá), un beato franciscano, quien, para entonces, contaba con más de seiscientos milagros en su haber.[914] Cerca del pueblo de Paracuellos de Jarama,

> un día por el fin de septiembre, del año de 1603, [fray Julián] dixo delante de cinco testigos que a las nueve de la noche, poco más, aparecerían en el cielo dos nubes coloradas, una en la parte de Oriente y otra en la de Occidente, y se juntarían en una; y al tiempo que se juntassen, saldria del Purgatorio y entraría en la Gloria el ánima del Católico Rey don Felipe II de gloriosa memoria.

Una vez hecha esta profecía, según fray Antonio de Daza —quien escribió una breve biografía sobre su compañero franciscano—, fray Julián se retiró a rezar.

> Y afirman los sobredichos testigos que quando les dixo estas cosas, estaua el cielo raso y sereno, y lo estuvo hasta las nueve de la noche, poco más, que de las partes de Oriente y Occidente se levantaron dos nubes coloradas, tan resplandecientes que la noche parecía día porque se vian las casas y las calles tan claramente como si huuiera sol en las nubes.[915]

Esta visión fue tan celebrada que, en la década de 1640, el pintor Bartolomé Esteban Murillo la conmemoró en un lienzo

para un convento franciscano en Sevilla. Aparecían en él fray Julián, los cinco testigos y las calles iluminadas de Paracuellos, mientras Felipe se reunía con sus padres y hermanos en el paraíso [véase lámina 45].

Sin embargo, una sorprendente anomalía traía preocupado a Daza. Aunque el difunto rey «procuró siempre la exaltación de la fe, y extirpación de los herejías», y pese a haber sufrido una terrible agonía durante su última enfermedad,

> desde que murió hasta que el santo fray Julián tuvo esta revelación, y dixo esta profecía, passaron cuatro años, tiempo bastante a nuestro parecer, junto con los muchos sufragios y missas que por su alma se dixeron en todos sus reynos para purificarla en el Purgatorio, y para que purificada en él, fuesse a gozar de Dios para siempre.

En su relato de una visión similar referida por otro franciscano, en la que esta vez era el ánima de Carlos V la que ascendía a la Gloria «cuatro años después de su muerte», Daza no albergaba ninguna duda sobre la causa de la demora: el «no auer castigado a Lutero, quando le pudo prender».[916] Pero ¿por qué el hijo de Carlos, que no había vacilado a la hora de enviar a herejes a la hoguera y casi nunca había transigido con la herejía, había pasado más tiempo aún en el purgatorio? Daza no podía contestar su propia pregunta, y no fue el único. Muchas otras personas han intentado establecer el lugar de Felipe II en la historia, algunos como un santo y un héroe, otros como un pecador y un bellaco.

Epílogo

En su sermón fúnebre por Felipe II en San Jerónimo el Real, en Madrid, el doctor Aguilar de Terrones recurrió a un elaborado símil para recordar a sus oyentes la magnitud de las tareas a las que se enfrentó el gobernante del primer imperio global de la historia:

> Es la vida de un rey como la de un texedor y su muerte como cuando se corta la tela del telar. Pensaréys que es descansada vida la del texedor, porque se está en su casa y con su abrigo, arrimado y encaxado en su telar; y verdaderamente es oficio trabajosísimo. El trabaja con los braços, miradle a los pies y veréys qué trabajo trae con ellos, sobre las premideras, los ojos enclauados en la tela, so pena de enmarañársele toda. La atención tan partida a tantos hilos, uno hazía aquí, otro hazía allí; el ojo a qualquiera que se quiebra para atarle luego… Esta es la vida de un rey, con las manos escriuiendo, con los pies caminando, el coraçón repartido en hilos; un hilo en Flandes, otro en Italia, otro en África, otro en el Perú, otro en Nueva España, otro en los ingleses católicos, otro en la paz de los príncipes cristianos, otro en las aflicciones del Imperio. ¡Qué atención tan grande a diversos gouiernos y peligros![917]

Quizá porque su audiencia incluía al nuevo rey, Felipe III, Aguilar de Terrones acentuó lo positivo en su sermón y omitió que el difunto tejedor había dejado su imperio empeñado en dos costosas guerras en el extranjero sin acabar, una grave crisis económica en el interior y siete provincias de los Países Bajos todavía en rebelión. Muchos pensaban que había dejado su monarquía en un estado mucho más débil que cuando retornó victorioso a España en 1559 y propusieron dos explicaciones al respecto:

> Una herencia problemática. Algunos echaban la culpa al tamaño y la composición de la monarquía: había llegado a ser demasiado grande para su propio bien e imposible de defender. Los fracasos eran, pues, debidos a elementos estructurales: ni Felipe ni ningún otro gobernante habría podido mantener unida su herencia.

Un rey problemático. Otros argumentaban que el problema no era que Felipe careciera de suficientes activos, sino que los había empleado ineficazmente. Un monarca con superiores aptitudes políticas podría haber tenido éxito donde fracasó Felipe (o, por decirlo en términos actuales, echaban la culpa al agente en vez de a la estructura).

Una herencia problemática

En un principio, la primera explicación resulta la más verosímil. Según un aforismo de la época, *bella gerant alii. Tu, felix Austria, nube* («que otros hagan las guerras; tú, feliz Casa de Austria, cásate»); con el tiempo, esta estrategia de «imperialismo matrimonial» creó una estructura que era, en términos tanto territoriales como políticos, insostenible. Con la unión por matrimonio de Austria con Borgoña, y de Castilla con Aragón (con extensiones en Cerdeña, Sicilia y Nápoles), más la adición del Sacro Imperio Romano, se creó un Estado que abarcaba la mitad de Europa y, poco después, también gran parte de América central. Carlos V era el único común denominador de estas vastas y diversas posesiones: su imperio no tenía ni una lengua ni una moneda compartidas, ni leyes ni instituciones comunes, ni un plan de defensa conjunta, ni un sistema económico integrado. Era, quizás, una ingenuidad esperar que un solo monarca pudiera llegar a gobernar todos estos territorios eficientemente, sobre todo cuando el mismo «imperialismo matrimonial» que creó esta vasta herencia produjo también una reserva genética disminuida que perjudicó la capacidad de los soberanos para engendrar sucesores competentes *(véase capítulo 10)*.

De vez en cuando, Carlos consideraba una partición de sus posesiones, con la separación de Alemania y los Países Bajos respecto a España e Italia; pero no la llevó a cabo hasta 1555,

cuando permitió a su hijo Felipe, en aquel entonces rey de Inglaterra y poco después también de España, renunciar a sus derechos de sucesión sobre el Imperio porque, según suponía, Inglaterra podría garantizar de allí en adelante la seguridad de los Países Bajos. Sin embargo, la muerte de María Tudor en 1558, sumada a la abdicación por parte de Carlos de sus derechos sucesorios al Imperio en su hermano Fernando ese mismo año, dejó a Flandes en un peligroso aislamiento. En 1566, el embajador francés en Madrid observó que «el rey tiene tantas regiones por las que preocuparse que no puede ocuparse de todas ellas»; esa «preocupación» de Felipe creció todavía más cuando subió al trono de Portugal en 1580. La concentración de tantos territorios bajo un solo cetro destruyó el equilibrio de poder en Europa y provocó que Francia, Inglaterra y la República Holandesa formaran una alianza común contra Felipe.[918]

Cuatro años después de la muerte de Felipe, un eminente diplomático español, el duque de Sessa, expresaba su desesperación por la situación estratégica subyacente en una carta confidencial a su colega don Baltasar de Zúñiga:

> Verdaderamente, señor, me parece que poco a poco nos vamos haziendo terreno adonde todo el mundo quiere tirar sus flechas, i Vuestra Señoría sabe que ningún imperio, por grande que aya sido, a podido sustentar largo tiempo muchas guerras juntas en diferentes partes […]. Yo me puedo engañar, pero dudo de que con solo tratar de defendernos se pueda sustentar imperio tan derramado como el nuestro.

Para estos veteranos ministros de Felipe, «el imperio donde no se ponía nunca el sol» se había convertido en el blanco donde todo eran tinieblas. A pesar de ello, en otra carta confidencial escrita dos años más tarde, Sessa compartía con Zúñiga un análisis muy diferente de la situación estratégica de la monarquía hispánica. «Lo que siento es que quisiera que no salpicáramos en tantas partes, sino hazer grande esfuerço en una, i acabado aquello en otra», lamentaba el duque:

> No sé para qué son tantas meriendas i almuerços i ninguna buena comida. Yo juntáralo todo, con que quizá se pudiera hazer algun efetto de consideración: o en Irlanda o en Berbería. I recelo mucho que en ambas partes no haremos más que perder el tiempo, la gente, i dinero, i reputación, como solemos.[919]

Sessa distaba de ser el primero en señalar que el principal problema de Felipe no era la falta de recursos, sino más bien su incapacidad para movilizar eficazmente los recursos existentes. Tras el fracaso de la Gran Armada, el jesuita Pedro de Ribadeneira se preguntó cómo era posible que «tanta y tan gruessa hacienda como tiene Su Magestad luzga tan poco y se hunda». Tres años después, Mateo Vázquez intentaba convencer a Felipe de que si Dios «quisiera obligar a Vuestra Magestad a acudir a remediar los trabajos del mundo, que diera a Vuestra Magestad hazienda y fuerzas para ello». Las Cortes de Castilla llegaron prácticamente a la misma conclusión: «Casi todos los procuradores se inclinaran a suplicar a Vuestra Magestad con mucha instancia antes de tratar a otra cosa, se sirva de mandar moderar los gastos de la guerra, así en Flandes como en otras partes».[920] ¿Por qué se negó el rey una y otra vez, sin excepción, a escuchar tales consejos?

Un rey problemático

¿Acaso sus triunfos iniciales —las aplastantes victorias de San Quintín y Gravelinas; la paz favorable de Cateau-Cambrésis— convencieron al joven rey de que era invencible cuando realizaba lo que entendía como la obra de Dios? Es cierto que le persuadieron de que debía romper las negociaciones en curso para una tregua con el sultán otomano: «Habiendo sucedido la paz entre mi y el serenísimo rey de Francia», informó a sus ministros pocos días después de firmar, «me ha parecido que por agora no me conviene tratar ni tener tregua con él» *(véase capítulo 7)*. Resultó ser un error de cálculo catastrófico: una paz o tregua en 1559 habría dejado el Mediterráneo occidental prácticamente como un «lago cristiano», mientras que en 1577,

cuando Felipe se aseguró finalmente un cese de las hostilidades, el sultán se había apoderado tanto de Túnez como de La Goleta y había atraído Marruecos a su órbita.

La creencia de que estaba haciendo la voluntad de Dios también llevó a Felipe a persistir en sus fallidos intentos de «matar o prender» a Isabel Tudor, a pesar de invertir inmensos recursos en ello y de que los ingleses capturaron o hundieron embarcaciones y mercancías españolas cada año y dañaron diversas posesiones de Felipe, culminando con la toma y saqueo de Cádiz en 1596. Cuando por fin llegó la paz en 1603-1604, después de tantos años de sufrimientos y sacrificios, el sucesor de Isabel, Jacobo Estuardo, se negó a satisfacer los tres principales objetivos de la guerra de Felipe: retirar las guarniciones inglesas de las ciudades holandesas rebeldes; conceder tolerancia a los católicos ingleses; y reconocer el derecho exclusivo de España a comerciar con América. Los recursos que gastó en Francia tampoco le produjeron a Felipe beneficios permanentes, aunque la sucesión de guerras civiles debilitara a su heredado rival y le confiriera a él mismo una enorme ventaja. Es verdad que al líder protestante, Enrique de Borbón, le resultaba conveniente convertirse al catolicismo para ganar un apoyo más amplio, tanto en Francia como en el extranjero; pero pocos días después de firmar la paz con España en 1598, otorgó a sus súbditos franceses libertad de culto, garantizada por numerosas guarniciones pagadas por su tesorería.

El día en que murió Felipe, el nuncio en Madrid hizo una lista de los logros del rey y destacó como especialmente digna de elogio su «ayuda a los católicos […] sin mirar a sus intereses», no solo en Inglaterra y Francia, sino también en los Países Bajos, donde el difunto rey había «gastado enorme tesoro en la reducción de sus rebeldes y en la conservación de la fe católica en Flandes por no haber querido paz con sus súbditos,

pudiendo haberla con condiciones inicuas para la fe católica». Estaba en lo cierto. Según las propias palabras del rey en 1566, «antes que sufrir la menor quiebra del mundo en lo de la religión, y del servicio de Dios, perderé todos mis estados y cien vidas que tuviesse». En Breda, en 1575, el rey puso fin a unas negociaciones que habrían resuelto casi todos los demás temas pendientes porque no estaba dispuesto a conceder la tolerancia religiosa pedida por sus súbditos rebeldes en dos provincias. Dos años más tarde, rechazó el Edicto Perpetuo ya alcanzado con sus vasallos rebeldes y rompió las conversaciones de paz con ellos en 1579, y de nuevo en 1589, para mantener intacta «la professión que Su Magestad ha hecho y opinión que ha ganado a costa de tantos tesoros y vidas de no consentir un tilde torçido en cosa de religión». No se trata de una exageración: un contemporáneo afirmó que «todas las [guerras] que España ha hecho dentro y fuera, desde el rey don Pelayo acá, no pudieran haber hecho tanto gasto» como el coste total de las guerras de Felipe «en 40 años que gobernó».[921]

Puede parecer extraño que tantos reveses, pese a la movilización de tantos recursos, no condujeran a Felipe a cambiar sus políticas. Para explicarlo, un observador inglés en los Países Bajos daba dos razones: «El orgullo del gobierno español y la causa de la religión», una suma de motivos que Felipe habría denominado «religión y reputación». Era un juicio acertado: los estadistas siempre detestan admitir la derrota y con ello perder «reputación», y cuanto mayores son los recursos dedicados a una lucha, más difícil es desvincularse de ella. Felipe no fue ninguna excepción. Como observó él mismo: «Yo no dudo de que, si uviese de durar el gasto de allí como agora va, no se podría llevar adelante; pero es gran lástima que, aviéndose gastado tanto, y ofreçiéndose ocasiones que con poco más podría ser remediarse todo, los ayamos de perder».[922]

Además, y de nuevo al igual que otros estadistas, Felipe siempre pareció dispuesto a correr más y mayores riesgos para evitar pérdidas que para alcanzar ganancias. Le fue relativamente fácil retirar sus fuerzas de Finale Ligure en 1573, porque —como le recordó perspicazmente su hermana María: «Mire que [esta] negra reputación nos haze salir de seso, y aun a las vezes del mundo»— ese territorio no había pertenecido nunca a Felipe.[923] Estaba en juego mucho más que la «reputación» con los territorios que había heredado. En 1566 sus ministros le recordaron que no lograr restaurar el control real sobre los Países Bajos no solo «aventuraba la reputación de España» en toda Europa, sino también que «si el alboroto de Flandes pasa adelante, seguirá Milán y Nápoles». Una década después, argumentaban que la blandura hacia los flamencos pondría en peligro «la obediencia para con otros vasallos, que es mucho de temer lo tomarían por exemplo para se levantar, a lo menos los de conquista como Nápoles y Milán», y que reanudar la guerra en los Países Bajos era la única manera de mantener «la honra y reputación de Vuestra Magestad, que es la mayor pieça de su arnés» cuando se trata de potencias extranjeras.[924]

Sacar fuerza moral del fracaso

Felipe no fue, por supuesto, el único estadista reacio a aceptar la derrota, pero su profunda fe religiosa lo llevaba a reaccionar ante los reveses de un modo inusual. El escritor Primo Levi, superviviente del Holocausto y un agudo observador de la naturaleza humana, afirmó que «los hombres que de una caída sacan fuerza moral son pocos»;[925] sin duda, Felipe era uno de ellos. Su inquebrantable piedad lo llevó en varias ocasiones a ver el fracaso e incluso la derrota como una señal de que Dios lo estaba poniendo a prueba: convencido de que debía perseverar a lo largo del camino recto que había elegido, el rey

estaba seguro de que un milagro salvaría la distancia entre su interpretación de los designios de Dios y los recursos de que disponía para alcanzarlos. Su confianza en este punto jamás vaciló. Ya en 1559 declaró que, dado que todo depende «de la voluntad de Dios, no hay que hazer sino esperar lo que Él será más servido. Y yo espero en Él que, pues me ha sacado de otros barrancos mayores, me sacará también deste, y me dará forma para que yo entretenga mis estados y no se me pierdan por no tener forma para entretenellos» *(véase capítulo 7)*. Aunque podía quedar abatido temporalmente por una derrota inesperada, como el desastre de la Gran Armada, pronto se las arreglaba para ver un hilo de esperanza. Así, poco después de haber dicho a un ministro, en otoño de 1588, que «yo espero en Dios que no habrá permitido tanto mal como algunos deven temer, pues todo se ha hecho por su servicio» y «si Dios no haze milagro (que así espero en el) que antes que esto sea, me ha de llevar para sí, como yo se lo pido, por no ver tanta mala ventura y desdicha», aseguraba a otros que «nunca faltaré por my parte a boluer por la causa de Dios y bien destos reynos en quanto me fuere posible», y comenzó a planear una nueva invasión de Inglaterra *(véase capítulo 18)*.

Esta confianza llevó a Felipe a adoptar iniciativas poco realistas y a rechazar las presiones para cambiarlas cuando empezaban a fracasar. En septiembre de 1571, por ejemplo, después de dieciocho meses de coléricos intercambios durante los cuales Felipe bombardeó al duque de Alba con largas cartas exhortativas que le instaban a derrocar a Isabel Tudor, el obstruccionismo metódico de Alba finalmente hizo mella. ¡Felipe argumentaba ahora que, incluso si el duque estaba en lo cierto desde un punto de vista logístico, sus consideraciones resultaban irrelevantes!

> Con ser vuestra autoridad acerca de Nos tanta, y tener el crédito que tengo en vuestra persona y prudencia en todo, y especialmente en esto que lo habéis

> tratado y estáis tan sobre ello, y con ser las razones que Nos proponéis tan eficaces, deseo tan de veras el efecto de este negocio, y estoy así tocado en el alma dél, y he entrado en una confianza tal, que Dios Nuestro Señor lo ha de guiar como causa suya, que no me puedo satisfacer ni aquietar de lo contrario. Y de aquí procede entenderlo yo diferentemente, y hacérseme muy menores las dificultades y inconvenientes que se pone delante, me haga menos embarazo del que paresce que pudiera hacer.

Felipe argumentaba que la logística (el área en que Alba era especialista) solo constituía una pieza de la Empresa de Inglaterra:

> No paresce que en un negocio tan grande como este, se debe en tal manera entrar en la consideración de los inconvenientes que resultarían errándose y no succediendo bien, que juntamente no se pongan en la otra balanza los beneficios y provechos que se conseguirían del buen suceso, los cuales ni se puede negar ni dubdar que en lo de la religión y del Estado y de la reputación y a todos los otros fines a que yo puedo y debo entender, no sean así grandes y evidentes que no solo justamente me inclinen y aficionen a la causa, mas aún me obliguen y casi fuercen a asistir a ella.

Para la mentalidad de Felipe, religión y reputación dictaban por igual que «aunque no se puede negar que no se corran algunos inconvenientes y dificultades, preponderan a esto otras muchas consideraciones del cielo arriba y del cielo abajo, que obligan a aventurar esto y más».[926]

Felipe sometió al duque de Medina Sidonia a un chantaje espiritual parecido cuando, en junio de 1588, este intentó utilizar la tormenta que acababa de dispersar a la Gran Armada como excusa para abandonar la Empresa de Inglaterra: «Que a ser esta una guerra injusta, pudiera tomarse esta tormenta por señal de la voluntad de nuestro Señor para desistir de su offensa; mas siendo tan justa como es, no se deve creer que le ha de desamparar, sino de favorescer mejor que se puede dessear». Al llegar a este punto, el duque abandonó toda resistencia y condujo la Armada al desastre. No sabemos si llegó a escribir a Felipe para recordárselo, pero uno de sus adversarios ingleses sí lo haría más tarde. Sir Walter Raleigh, quien había contribuido a derrotar a la Armada, indicó que «invadir desde

el mar una costa peligrosa, sin estar en posesión de ningún puerto ni ayudado por ninguna fuerza, parece más propio de un príncipe confiado de su suerte que dotado de entendimiento».[927]

Habla el doctor Freud

Pero ¿por qué exactamente Felipe no solo estaba «confiado de su suerte», sino que, además, sacaba fuerza moral de sus fracasos, de modo que a menudo lograba repetirlos? Si bien su providencialismo tenía claramente un papel, la intransigencia y la disonancia cognitiva del rey también se derivaban de su personalidad. Aunque en general resulte arriesgado para los historiadores psicoanalizar a hombres y mujeres muertos largo tiempo atrás, Felipe ofrece un ejemplo llamativo de personalidad obsesiva u obsesiva-compulsiva (de hecho, una de las más fáciles de identificar). Los individuos obsesivos (y son muchos) presentan en mayor o menor grado las siguientes características:

- tercos y obstinados, pero indecisos;
- intransigentes y con excesivo control emocional;
- absortos por los detalles e incapaces de delegar;
- aplicados y trabajadores, pero no necesariamente muy eficientes;
- religiosos y austeros;
- entregados a la imparcialidad y la justicia, a menudo con una actitud rígida;
- faltos de humor y opuestos al cambio.

Esta biografía ofrece incontables ejemplos en los que Felipe presenta todas estas características, y se podrían proporcionar muchos más. Todo ayudaba a programar al rey para que permaneciese inflexible al enfrentarse con el fracaso.

Los individuos obsesivos comparten también rasgos personales más difíciles de documentar. Suelen:

- odiar la suciedad y mantenerse muy limpios;
- adorar la rutina, el orden y la puntualidad;
- disfrutar coleccionando y ser a menudo mezquinos y reacios a desprenderse de sus posesiones;
- tener un reducido impulso sexual y sentirse poco atraídos por el sexo opuesto.

En el caso de Felipe, las pruebas sobre estos atributos subjetivos son también abundantes. Acerca del primero, Jehan Lhermite observó que Felipe «era por naturaleza el hombre más limpio, aseado y cuidadoso para con su persona que jamás ha habido en la tierra, y lo era en tal extremo que no podía tolerar sin molestia una sola mancha pequeña en la pared y suelo de sus habitaciones». Respecto al segundo, el mismo Lhermite comentó que los relojes «gobernaban totalmente a este buen monarca, pues regulaban y escandían su vida, dividiéndola en minutos que, contados y ordenados, medían sus acciones y ocupaciones diarias» *(véase capítulo 6)*. Una buena muestra de la tercera característica —la mezquindad— pudo verse en 1571, cuando buscaba «Su Magestad una sortija para la reyna de Escocia». En vez de regalarle una de las piedras preciosas que había coleccionado él mismo, Felipe ordenó a un oficial que «imbie aquí para mañana después de comer las que tiene del príncipe nuestro señor». A continuación, después de inspeccionar la colección de joyas dejadas por el malogrado don Carlos, Felipe escogió un magnífico rubí engastado en un anillo y se lo envió a María Estuardo.[928] Por último, aunque el rey mantuvo al menos una relación sexual ilícita en sus años mozos, después de cumplir los veinte demostró, aparentemente, un interés limitado por el sexo.

Las causas de la personalidad obsesiva siguen siendo poco claras. Sigmund Freud la atribuyó a una enseñanza demasiado severa para el niño sobre cómo controlar higiénicamente sus necesidades —y, por tanto, la denominó «personalidad anal»—, pero es más probable que se deba a una educación demasiado estricta, y la infancia de Felipe estuvo rigurosamente reglamentada. Como único heredero varón, sus padres apenas podían evitar adoptar una actitud protectora respecto a él, sobre todo después de la muerte de sus dos hermanos en la niñez. A la emperatriz le entraba pánico cada vez que sus restantes hijos, especialmente Felipe, sufrían la menor enfermedad y, aunque ella murió en 1539 y Carlos se ausentaba a menudo, el ayo don Juan de Zúñiga controlaba hasta el más mínimo detalle cada momento de la vida del príncipe, determinando con exactitud lo que podía y no podía hacer (incluso, después de su casamiento, controlaba cuándo podía o no dormir con su esposa).

Además, aun cuando se hallaba ausente, Carlos representaba un modelo excepcional a cuya altura debía estar su hijo: un hombre de acción y vencedor en numerosas batallas, un dirigente por instinto y un viajero cosmopolita que dominaba cinco idiomas, un maestro de la frase y el gesto desenvuelto igualmente a gusto en el brillo deslumbrador de las ceremonias públicas que en la despreocupada compañía de sus amigos íntimos. Sin embargo, este soberano heroico tenía solo un heredero legítimo, y el largo aprendizaje de Felipe, que se prolongó desde 1543 hasta la muerte de Carlos en 1558, acentuó en el joven la conciencia de la necesidad del éxito y la desgracia del fracaso. Estaba, por tanto, abrumado con una aplastante carga psicológica de expectativas de sí mismo y una compulsión sobrecogedora de demostrarse que era digno de su padre y de su misión. Con buena razón, John H. Elliott veía «la pesada carga, no solo política sino también psicológica y

espiritual, de su herencia dinástica» como la llave a la personalidad regia.[929]

No es extraño que Felipe llegara a albergar una profunda inseguridad sobre su capacidad de desempeñar el papel público que esperaban de él la sociedad, su familia y él mismo, ni que, mucho después de la muerte de su padre, volviera a surgir inesperadamente su falta de autoestima. En 1563, a la edad de treinta y cinco años, cuando su plan de poner la primera piedra de San Lorenzo de El Escorial tropezó con dificultades, Felipe manifestó que «estoy confuso en todo» y «estoy por encomendar al nuncio que lo haga y no ir yo». Aunque en esta ocasión acabó participando, más tarde, cuando nació su primera hija, fue presa de los nervios ante el brete de llevar en brazos a la criatura a la pila bautismal y se puso a practicar «paseándose con un gran muñeco en brazos de un lado a otro de la habitación». Esta vez, «al final no consiguió hacerlo bien, por lo que tuvo que dejar que fuera don Juan quien llevara en brazos a la infanta».[930]

Cualesquiera que sean sus causas, la personalidad obsesiva está particularmente mal preparada para la dirección de la guerra, pues dirigir hostilidades exige un esfuerzo de tal magnitud que deja pocas reservas de energía e intelectuales para ocuparse de otros problemas. Se trata de una consideración importante en el caso de Felipe, puesto que pasó todo su reinado excepto seis meses combatiendo a sus enemigos, en ocasiones simultáneamente. En los primeros años de su reinado, el rey permitía a sus lugartenientes cierta discreción. «Abemos acordado de os remitir esto para que vos, como persona que tenéis la cosa presente, y veréis lo que converna hazerse para el servicio de dios nuestro señor y nuestro», informaba a su virrey de Nueva España en 1557, refiriéndose a la colonización de La Florida. Incluso delegó (aunque a regañadientes) en el escéptico duque de Alba la decisión de si

había que invadir o no Inglaterra en 1571: «Vos lo guiéis y encaminéis, como viéredes que más conviene al servicio de Dios y nuestro: que yo lo pongo en vuestras manos, quedando muy confiado que vos procederéis con el celo, cuidado y prudencia que negocio tan grande requiere».[931] Esta flexibilidad desapareció en la década de 1580. En su lugar, Felipe prohibió al marqués de Santa Cruz, un almirante con amplia experiencia, apartarse de las detalladas instrucciones que acababa de redactar para la Empresa de Inglaterra. El marqués debía seguir las órdenes sin dudar del conocimiento del rey —«creedme, como a quien tiene entera noticia del estado en que se hallan al presente las cosas en todas partes»— ni desviarse de ellas.

El rey se engañaba a sí mismo. Pese a que su red de información era la mejor que existía, cuando una noticia llegaba a su escritorio, «el estado en que se hallan al presente las cosas» ya había cambiado. Esta ilusión mostraba de forma alarmante que seguía sin entender la enorme complejidad que implicaba cualquier operación combinada de gran envergadura. La actitud de Felipe recibió un complemento fatal cuando Santa Cruz objetó que «es harto aventurar navegar con gran armada de invierno, y más por aquel canal y sin tener puerto cierto». El rey respondió con altivez: «El tiempo, Dios (cuya es la causa) se hará de esperar que le dará bueno de Su mano».[932] De hecho, esta era la expectativa —como dijo sir Walter Raleigh— de «un príncipe confiado de su suerte», más que la de alguien «dotado de entendimiento».

Contingencia y casualidad

Por supuesto, no hay hegemonía que dure para siempre: las circunstancias son altamente desfavorables a la conservación de los imperios globales, en especial si se da la distancia y fragmentación, la sobrecarga de información y la carencia de

instituciones, lengua, leyes y objetivos comunes que caracterizaban la monarquía de Felipe. Aun así, difícil no es lo mismo que imposible. Hacia 1590, el teórico político Giovanni Botero argumentó que los diversos dominios del rey, aunque separados unos de otros, «no por eso deben estimarse discontinuos». Por el contrario, «están unidos por medio del mar, y no hay estado, por más lejano que esté, que no pueda ser ayudado por armas marítimas».[933] A pesar de todos los problemas estructurales, y de la personalidad obsesiva del rey, Felipe estuvo extraordinariamente cerca de alcanzar el éxito en sus principales empresas. Con solo una mínima reescritura de la historia (o, en términos de Felipe, «un pequeño milagro»), el resultado podría haber sido muy distinto. En el caso de Inglaterra:

- Si María Tudor hubiera muerto en 1571, a los cincuenta y cinco años como su padre Enrique VIII (por no decir en 1585, a los sesenta y nueve, como su hermanastra Isabel), en lugar de en 1558, a los cuarenta y dos, Inglaterra seguramente habría continuado siendo católica y de los Austrias.
- Si Felipe hubiera conseguido hacer otro viaje más de Bruselas a Londres en 1558 (una proeza que algunos correos lograban en dos días) y persuadir tanto a María como al Parlamento para que reconocieran como siguiente soberana a Isabel, quizá casada con Manuel Filiberto de Saboya, Inglaterra hubiera seguido siendo católica y favorable a los Austrias.
- Por último, si Felipe hubiese adoptado una estrategia (cualquiera) para la conquista de Inglaterra en 1588 que no hubiera requerido que la Armada se uniese por adelantado al ejército de Parma y, además, hubiera habido

al mando un almirante con experiencia de combate, como Santa Cruz, podría haberse asegurado una cabeza de puente en el sur de Inglaterra o Irlanda que habría forzado a Isabel a abandonar a los holandeses y permitido a Parma terminar con la rebelión. Felipe hubiera dispuesto entonces de abundantes recursos que movilizar en Francia después del asesinato de Enrique III.

De modo semejante, en el caso de los Países Bajos:

- Si Felipe hubiera regresado en cualquier momento entre 1561 (cuando la oposición al plan de los nuevos obispados unió a sus adversarios) y 1571 (cuando la recesión económica y el régimen opresor de Alba hicieron altamente probable una nueva rebelión), la guerra de los Países Bajos podría haberse evitado por completo.
- Si Alba hubiera aceptado los términos ofrecidos por Haarlem a finales de 1572, en vez de insistir en la rendición incondicional, las demás ciudades rebeldes podrían haber procurado entablar negociaciones y se habría puesto fin a la revuelta (un resultado que incluso Guillermo de Orange consideraba inevitable).

En ambos guiones contrafactuales, evitar la sangría que significó la guerra para la hacienda de Felipe le habría permitido intervenir con mayor eficacia en otras partes o utilizar sus ingentes recursos para desarrollar la vida económica y cultural de España.

Otras muchas «reescrituras mínimas» de la historia habrían permitido a Felipe alcanzar más objetivos políticos suyos. Sobre todo, si Sebastián de Portugal y Enrique III de Francia no hubieran encontrado una muerte violenta sin haber engendrado

descendientes, Felipe habría seguido beneficiándose de su constante incompetencia, en caso de seguir vivos, o bien se habría aprovechado de la debilidad de otra minoría de edad real, de haber dejado un joven heredero. Cualquiera de esos resultados habría conservado el equilibrio de poder existente en Europa y, por tanto, mejorado la seguridad de la monarquía de Felipe. Sus enemigos habrían carecido de alicientes para formar una coalición contra lo que veían como un intento español de alcanzar el dominio de Europa.

Cada variación habría podido tener consecuencias espectaculares, dado que Felipe reunía ya tantas ventajas. Los recursos a su disposición, tanto humanos como materiales, crecieron prodigiosamente en Europa y en América a lo largo de su reinado, y también lo hizo su capacidad para movilizarlos, mientras que los recursos de sus adversarios se fueron reduciendo. Inglaterra era gobernada por una mujer que, a pesar de ser una hábil política, carecía de un sucesor claro, disponía de rentas limitadas y tenía que tomar en cuenta a una minoría religiosa numerosa y descontenta. Los gobernantes protestantes y católicos alemanes se negaban a cooperar entre sí, lo que ocasionó una parálisis constitucional en el Sacro Imperio Romano. Francia disipó sus vastos recursos con las guerras de religión. Los sultanes otomanos se vieron inmersos en su propia guerra religiosa contra Persia. Por añadidura, raras veces se veían del todo negras las cosas desde El Escorial: el fracaso de una de las empresas de Felipe solía coincidir con el éxito de otra. Así, al fallo de su plan de «matar o prender a la Isabel», su humillante retirada de Finale y el resurgimiento de la revuelta en los Países Bajos en los años 1571 y 1572, Felipe podía contraponer la resonante victoria de Lepanto, el nacimiento de un heredero y la masacre de San Bartolomé. A las pérdidas de Flandes podía contraponer la anexión de Portugal y la expansión de su poder en América y las Filipinas.

La fortuna (o, como habría dicho él, Dios) sonrió a menudo a Felipe y convirtió inesperadamente un fracaso en una victoria. Así, en 1565, antes de saber que los hugonotes franceses habían fundado una colonia en La Florida, Felipe había firmado ya un contrato con Pedro Menéndez de Avilés que le permitió desplegar fuerzas masivas antes de que los colonizadores pudieran establecer una base defensiva. Entre 1577 y 1584, el sultán otomano renovó la tregua en el Mediterráneo cuatro veces, lo que permitió a Felipe movilizar los recursos necesarios para anexionar Portugal y las Azores, y reconquistar los Países Bajos meridionales, sin el temor de ser atacado por la espalda. Por último, en 1591, las Alteraciones de Aragón estallaron en el preciso momento en que Felipe estaba reclutando un ejército para intervenir en el sur de Francia, y esta fuerza le permitió aplastar el levantamiento en menos de una semana.

El enigma de Felipe II

Estas «historias alternativas» nos llevan al centro del enigma de Felipe. Por volver al prolongado símil del doctor Aguilar de Terrones: si realmente «es la vida de un rey como la de un texedor», el fracaso de Felipe a la hora de alcanzar un mayor número de sus objetivos dinásticos y confesionales no fue consecuencia de la estructura de su telar, la configuración de su tela o la debilidad de sus hilos individuales, sino de las limitaciones del tejedor. El éxito exigía «una vida tan atenta y tan divertida en tantos hilos», algo que Felipe parecía incapaz de proporcionar. Quizás una última y breve visita a San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial ayude a explicar el porqué. El rey se enorgullecía de su construcción más allá de toda medida, por lo cual al utilizarlo para evaluar sus logros estamos eligiendo una escala que el mismo Felipe habría acogido con los brazos abiertos.

Para empezar, hay que rendir homenaje al asombroso logro en general. Es uno de los mayores edificios de Europa, concebido, construido y completado en solo treinta y cinco años, de modo que, como alardeaba fray José de Sigüenza, autor de la primera historia de El Escorial, «no pareciese todo el templo hecho de diversas piezas, sino que se había acabado dentro de una peña, por la grande uniformidad del color, grano y junta de sus piedras». Incluso los extranjeros consideraban la estructura en su conjunto «el palacio más magnífico de toda Europa» (John Eliot en 1593), «superior a cualquier otro edificio hoy existente en el mundo» (el embajador de Venecia en 1602) y «la fábrica mayor y mejor dispuesta de Europa» (el embajador de Lucca en 1618).[934] Sin embargo, tal perfección tuvo un precio muy alto. El mismo embajador veneciano notaba que «ha costado construirlo treinta cinco años de continuo trabajo y diez millones en oro». No obstante, como Sigüenza —que afirmaba con vehemencia que el coste «no llega a seis millones»— cuestionaba intencionadamente, ¿acaso tantos ducados «resolviéronse en humo o lleváronselos fuera de España? No». Por el contrario, apuntó el fraile, muchos de ellos fueron a parar al «oficial de Toledo, y allí mantiene su casa y sus hijos con ello» y «el labrador de Galapagar, el de Robledo, el de Valdemorillo» que «picaba una piedra, traía unos cantos, hacía unos ladrillos, cavaba un terreno, se lo llevaron» a El Escorial. El goteo de beneficios económicos llevaba a Sigüenza a desear, con cierta picardía, «que los reyes emprendiesen mayores fábricas que estas» en vez de gastar tanto dinero en el extranjero.[935]

Con todo, el impresionante análisis económico keynesiano de Sigüenza omitía un detalle crucial: los costes de oportunidad que representaban las horas que Felipe dedicó al proyecto. Este libro abunda en ejemplos: la utilización de sus propias tijeras para recortar la descripción de un pecado cometido por un

novicio en 1571; la asignación por él mismo de la celda que había de ocupar cada fraile en 1572; la visita a «las canteras donde se sacaban las dichas piedras para ver cargar y descargar las dichas piezas» en persona, para «verlo todo a vista de ojo», en 1576; o su demanda de que se llevara un «modelo de las sillas» del coro hasta Badajoz para que él pudiera seleccionar el diseño que deseaba en 1580. Nunca renunció a su control microscópico: en 1590 «a costado a Su Magestad el poner el crucifixo subir i bajar más de dos mil escalones en vezes»; el proceso le llevó seis días.[936] Cada hora que Felipe destinaba a estos detalles mientras estaba sentado a su «telar del Estado» comprometía su capacidad de «correr a atajar» cualquier hilo que se quebrara.

Como el nuncio en Madrid se quejaba en 1587: «Su Magestad quiere verlo y hacerlo todo él mismo, y eso no sería posible ni aunque tuviera diez manos y el mismo número de cabezas». De modo que, aunque su fe inflexible tuvo un papel importante en impedirle alcanzar sus objetivos, también le perjudicaron mucho los complejos obsesivos derivados de su educación y su incapacidad (en palabras de don Juan de Silva) de «hazer división de los [negocios] que conviene tomar para sý, y de los que no puede escusar de encargar a otros».[937] Esta combinación socavó la capacidad de Felipe para afrontar la avalancha de problemas que, inevitablemente, acuciaban al gobernante de decenas de millones de súbditos en una monarquía global casi permanentemente en guerra. Muy pocos hombres pueden sobresalir a la vez como inspectores de obras y estadistas de superpotencias. El mismo conjunto de aptitudes que le preparó tan magníficamente para la primera tarea, y produjo con ello «la octava maravilla del mundo», comprometió su capacidad para lograrlo en la segunda, como gobernante del primer imperio donde no se ponía el sol.

Cronología

España y Portugal

1504 Muere Isabel la Católica, reina de Castilla; le suceden su hija Juana y su yerno Felipe I.

1506 Muere Felipe I de España; sus partidarios escapan a Bruselas para unirse a Carlos V; se recluye a Juana en Tordesillas (hasta su muerte en 1555).

1516 Muere Fernando el Católico, rey de Aragón y regente de Castilla; le sucede el archiduque Carlos (que gobierna junto con su madre Juana, reclusa en Tordesillas).

1520 Revuelta de las Comunidades contra Carlos V en Castilla; germanías en Valencia.

1526 Carlos se casa con Isabel de Portugal en Sevilla; el futuro Felipe II es engendrado en Granada; Carlos aprueba veinticinco mandatos contra los moriscos, pero acuerda suspenderlos durante cuarenta años.

1527 **Nacimiento y bautismo de Felipe**.

1528 Felipe es jurado príncipe heredero; nace la infanta María.

1529 **Carlos hace las paces con sus enemigos** y se ausenta de España (hasta 1533); coronado emperador (hasta 1558).

1531 La emperatriz viste de varón a Felipe por primera vez.

1533 Carlos regresa a España y otorga a Felipe el Toisón de Oro.

1534 **Silíceo es designado maestro del príncipe**; Ignacio de Loyola funda la Compañía de Jesús (se encuentra con el príncipe Felipe en 1535).

1535 Nace la infanta Juana; **se crea la Casa del Príncipe con don Juan de Zúñiga como ayo**; Carlos se ausenta de

España (hasta 1557).

539 **Muere la emperatriz Isabel de Portugal;** Carlos se ausenta de España (hasta 1541) y proporciona a Felipe su primer juego de Instrucciones.

540 **Se asignan al príncipe nuevos preceptores (Calvete de Estrella, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda)**; nacen Antonio Pérez y Ana de Mendoza.

541 Gonzalo Pérez es designado secretario particular de Felipe.

542 Carlos lleva a Felipe a Navarra y Aragón, donde es jurado príncipe.

543 **Carlos se ausenta de España (hasta 1556) con Felipe como regente y le envía nuevos juegos de Instrucciones; Felipe se casa con María Manuela de Portugal.**

544 Felipe, con armadura, interviene por primera vez en una justa en público; Carlos consulta a Felipe sobre la alternativa estipulada por la Paz de Crépy, pero rechaza sus consejos.

545 Nace el infante don Carlos; muere la princesa María Manuela de Portugal.

546 Carlos envía a Felipe su carta de emancipación.

547 Felipe visita Aragón.

548 **Carlos envía su «testamento político» y ordena la adopción de la etiqueta de Borgoña en la Casa Real. Felipe parte de España para el *Felicíssimo Viaje*;** Maximiliano y María son designados regentes.

549 **Nace la archiduquesa Ana de Austria en Cigales.**

551 Felipe regresa a España (hasta 1554); **Francia y los turcos declaran la guerra.**

553 La infanta Juana se casa con el príncipe Juan de Portugal (muerto en 1554).

Portugal (muerto en 1554).

1554 **Felipe parte de España hacia Inglaterra;** Juana se convierte en regente (hasta 1559).

1555 Muere en Tordesillas la reina Juana, abuela de Felipe.

1556 **Carlos abdica como rey de Castilla, de Aragón y de sus posesiones de ultramar en favor de Felipe.**

1557 Felipe hace testamento; la Hacienda de Castilla declara su primer decreto de suspensión; muerte de Juan III de Portugal, a quien sucede su nieto, Sebastián (hasta su muerte en 1578).

1558 Felipe nombra arzobispo de Toledo a Bartolomé Carranza; se descubren células protestantes en España; **muere Carlos V.**

1559 **Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis**; muere Enrique II de Francia; **Felipe regresa a España y se encuentra con su medio hermano, que adopta el nombre de Juan de Austria;** autos de fe en Sevilla y Valladolid (uno con asistencia de Felipe); arresto y encarcelamiento del arzobispo Carranza (hasta 1576).

1560 **Felipe se casa con Isabel de Valois**; la Hacienda de Castilla declara el segundo decreto de suspensión; don Carlos es jurado príncipe heredero; la familia real asiste a un auto de fe en Toledo.

1561 Felipe traslada la corte a Madrid y visita El Escorial.

1562 Don Carlos es enviado a Alcalá de Henares para que mejore su salud; en una caída, sufre graves heridas en la cabeza.

1563 Felipe parte hacia la Corona de Aragón (hasta 1564); se pone la primera piedra de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

1564 Felipe acepta los decretos de Trento y convoca concilios diocesanos, cada uno presidido por un real comisario; Felipe asiste a un auto de fe en Barcelona; los

archiduques Rodolfo y Ernesto llegan a España (hasta 1571).

565 Felipe consigue la devolución de las reliquias de san Eugenio y las escolta a Toledo; Diego de Espinosa es nombrado presidente del Consejo Real (hasta 1572).

566 Espinosa es designado inquisidor general (hasta 1572); Gonzalo Pérez muere y es sucedido como secretario de Estado por su hijo Antonio y su oficial mayor, Gabriel de Zayas, conjuntamente; nace la infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia (muerta en 1633).

567 El duque de Alba parte de España para restablecer el control real en los Países Bajos; Carranza es enviado a Roma; nace la infanta Catalina Micaela (muerta en 1597).

568 Don Juan de Austria es nombrado capitán general de la mar; **Felipe arresta al príncipe don Carlos, que muere en prisión; Isabel de Valois muere; revuelta de los moriscos de Granada (hasta 1571).**

569 Se extiende la revuelta de los moriscos; se publica la *Nueva Recopilación.*

570 Felipe visita Andalucía; **Felipe se casa con su sobrina Ana de Austria** (muerta en 1580), que llega con sus hermanos Alberto (muerto en 1621) y Wenceslao (muerto en 1578).

571 Don Juan de Austria es nombrado capitán general de la Santa Liga; termina la guerra de Granada; nace el príncipe Fernando (muerto en 1578); los monjes jerónimos se instalan en El Escorial.

572 Muere Espinosa; la Inquisición arresta y encarcela a fray Luis de León (hasta 1576).

573 Mueren la princesa Juana y Ruy Gómez de Silva; Mateo

Vázquez es designado secretario privado de Felipe; traslado de los primeros cuerpos reales a San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

574 El duque de Alba regresa a España.

575 **La Hacienda de Castilla declara el tercer decreto de suspensión**; *Relaciones topográficas* compiladas en Castilla; nace Diego Félix, príncipe heredero en 1580-1582.

576 Felipe se encuentra con Sebastián I de Portugal en Guadalupe.

577 Felipe sofoca un «motín» entre los obreros de El Escorial; Felipe estudia las profecías de Miguel de Piedrola y Beamonte (que se traslada de Nápoles a Madrid en 1578).

578 **Asesinato de Juan de Escobedo; Sebastián de Portugal invade Marruecos y muere en la batalla de Alcazarquivir**, donde la flor y nata de la aristocracia portuguesa perece o es hecha prisionera; el cardenal Enrique le sucede (hasta 1580); mueren el príncipe Fernando, el archiduque Wenceslao y don Juan de Austria; nace el futuro Felipe III; fray Diego de Chaves es designado confesor real (hasta 1592).

579 Caída en desgracia del duque de Alba; la rivalidad entre Mateo Vázquez y Antonio Pérez paraliza el gobierno de Felipe; el cardenal Granvela llega a Madrid para servir como principal consejero de Felipe; **Felipe hace arrestar a Antonio Pérez y a la princesa de Éboli.**

580 **El rey Enrique de Portugal muere y Felipe reclama la sucesión**; Diego Félix es jurado príncipe; Felipe hace un nuevo testamento, parte de Madrid hacia Extremadura, vuelve a llamar a Alba y dirige la conquista de Portugal;

don Antonio (pretendiente al trono portugués) es derrotado y huye a Francia en busca de apoyo; **muere Ana de Austria.**

581 **Felipe es jurado rey de Portugal en las Cortes de Tomar.**

582 Muere el príncipe Diego Félix; la emperatriz María se reúne con Felipe y le lleva a su hija Margarita (a quien desea casar con este); Santa Cruz conquista las Azores; Felipe condena a la princesa de Éboli a la muerte civil; Juan de Herrera funda la Academia de Matemáticas en Madrid; Felipe y su familia asisten a un auto de fe en Lisboa.

583 Felipe regresa a Castilla, tras dejar al archiduque Alberto como virrey de Portugal (hasta 1593); el futuro Felipe III es jurado príncipe heredero; Santa Cruz conquista la isla Terceira para Felipe.

584 Es consagrada la basílica de San Lorenzo de El Escorial y Felipe encarga frescos para la Sala de Batallas; Piedrola regresa a Madrid.

585 Don Juan de Zúñiga se convierte en el principal consejero de Felipe; el duque de Saboya se casa con la infanta Catalina; Felipe visita la Corona de Aragón (hasta 1586); embargo de todos los navíos extranjeros en los puertos hispánicos; **Drake saquea Galicia, las Canarias y las islas de Cabo Verde**; Antonio Pérez, condenado tras el proceso de visita, es encarcelado en Turégano.

586 Mueren don Juan de Zúñiga y el cardenal Granvela; **Felipe pide a Santa Cruz y a Parma que preparen planes para la Empresa de Inglaterra**; Catalina da a luz al primer nieto de Felipe; Antonio Pérez y su familia regresan a Madrid.

587 El ataque de Drake contra Cádiz interrumpe la Empresa de Inglaterra, pero Santa Cruz escolta las flotas de vuelta a salvo; la Inquisición arresta a Piedrola; Felipe da la bienvenida en Toledo a las reliquias de santa Leocadia.

588 **La Gran Armada intenta invadir Inglaterra, pero fracasa**; comienza el proceso contra Antonio Pérez; la Inquisición condena a Piedrola.

589 Los ingleses atacan La Coruña y la costa de Portugal; Felipe abandona los planes para una investigación (visita) a la Compañía de Jesús en España.

590 Las Cortes de Castilla votan el servicio de millones, un nuevo impuesto sobre los alimentos; Antonio Pérez escapa de prisión y huye a Aragón; Felipe ordena el confinamiento riguroso de la princesa de Éboli y de la familia de Pérez.

591 Motines populares en varias ciudades de Castilla; muere Mateo Vázquez; **Alteraciones de Aragón**, invasión del ejército real y ejecución de los cabecillas; Antonio Pérez huye a Béarn.

592 Mueren la princesa de Éboli y fray Diego de Chaves; **Jornada de Tarazona** (Felipe visita Castilla la Vieja, Navarra y Aragón).

593 Alteraciones en Portugal (Alentejo, Beja); **Felipe crea la Junta de Gobierno.**

594 Se descubre la conspiración de Gabriel de Espinosa, el pastelero de Madrigal; Felipe hace un nuevo testamento.

596 **La flota angloholandesa toma y saquea Cádiz**; Felipe promete ayuda a los rebeldes irlandeses; la Armada española se hace a la mar para atacar Inglaterra, pero ha de retirarse; **la Hacienda de Castilla declara un nuevo decreto de suspensión**; Felipe dispone que el príncipe

decreto de suspensión; Felipe dispone que el príncipe se case con la archiduquesa Catalina Renata, pero esta muere antes.

597 Las Cortes de Castilla votan el servicio de quinientos cuentos; la tercera Armada española, contra Inglaterra, se hace a la mar sin éxito; Felipe dispone que el príncipe se case con la archiduquesa Gregoria Maximiliana, pero esta muere antes; mueren la infanta Catalina Micaela y Juan de Herrera.

598 **La Paz de Vervins pone fin a la guerra con Francia; partición de la Monarquía entre Isabel y Felipe III; Felipe II firma sus disposiciones testamentarias finales y muere.**

599 Felipe III se casa con la archiduquesa Margarita, mientras que Alberto se desposa con Isabel, que abandona España para gobernar los Países Bajos (hasta 1621).

603 En Paracuellos de Jarama algunos testigos, avisados por fray Julián de Alcalá, ven el alma de Felipe ascender del purgatorio al cielo.

Francia, Alemania, los Países Bajos, Italia y el Mediterráneo

500 Carlos, futuro rey de España y sacro emperador romano, nace en Gante.

517 Martín Lutero desafía al papa por la venta de indulgencias.

519 Carlos es elegido sacro emperador romano (coronado en 1529).

520 Carlos V en Alemania; coronado rey de romanos; escucha a Lutero, pero le pone en libertad; Solimán el

Magnífico se convierte en sultán otomano (hasta 1566).

521 Francisco I crea una alianza contra los Habsburgo y declara la guerra a Carlos V; Solimán toma Belgrado.

525 Victoria imperial en Pavía; Francisco I es capturado y enviado a España como prisionero.

526 Francisco I es obligado a firmar el Tratado de Madrid, por el que hace amplias concesiones a Carlos y deja como rehenes a dos hijos (incluido el futuro Enrique II), pero más tarde reniega de él y reanuda la guerra; Solimán derrota a Hungría y toma Buda; Carlos concede tolerancia a los luteranos alemanes a cambio de su apoyo contra los turcos.

527 Saqueo de Roma por las tropas imperiales.

529 **Carlos firma la paz** con Francia, el papa, Venecia y otros enemigos en Europa; sitio de Viena por Solimán; Carlos renueva la tolerancia hacia los luteranos alemanes.

530 Dieta de Augsburgo; Carlos designa como su regente en los Países Bajos a su hermana María de Hungría (hasta 1555).

531 El infante Fernando, hermano de Carlos, elegido rey de romanos.

532 Carlos V se enfrenta a Solimán en Hungría y renueva la tolerancia hacia los luteranos alemanes a cambio de su ayuda contra los turcos.

535 Muere el último Sforza, duque de Milán, territorio que revierte a Carlos; campaña en África de Carlos, que toma Túnez.

540 Carlos V pasa por Francia hacia los Países Bajos para sofocar la revuelta de Gante; Carlos designa en secreto a Felipe duque de Milán.

541 Campaña africana de Carlos, que no logra tomar Argel.

542 Francisco I y el duque de Güeldres (Gelderland) declaran la guerra a Carlos V.

543 Anexión de Güeldres por el duque de Alba a los territorios de Carlos V.

544 Carlos V invade Francia, pero la Paz de Crépy le obliga a ceder Milán o bien Flandes, una elección que evita.

545 Nace don Juan de Austria; comienza el Concilio de Trento (hasta 1547).

547 Muere Francisco I, le sucede Enrique II; Carlos V derrota a los protestantes alemanes en Mühlberg; Carlos llama a Felipe y a María para que se reúnan con él en Alemania.

548 La Dieta de Augsburgo convierte los Países Bajos en un *Reichskreis* separado; Carlos redacta su «testamento político» para Felipe, quien parte de España hacia Italia.

549 Felipe atraviesa Alemania y se reúne con Carlos en Bruselas; **las provincias de los Países Bajos reconocen a Felipe como príncipe heredero al visitar cada una de ellas.**

550 Felipe y Carlos viajan a Alemania; **disputa familiar de los Habsburgo y pacto de sucesión en Augsburgo**; Felipe se encuentra con Tiziano.

551 Felipe abandona Alemania y regresa a España tras asistir al Concilio de Trento (reanudado en 1551-1552); **Enrique II, Solimán y los protestantes alemanes declaran la guerra a Carlos V;** Enrique toma Metz.

552 **El alzamiento de los alemanes protestantes obliga a huir a Carlos**; Carlos no logra reconquistar Metz.

554 Carlos V abdica como rey de Nápoles en favor de Felipe y lucha en su última campaña (para rechazar la invasión

y lucha en su última campaña (para rechazar la invasión francesa de los Países Bajos).

555 Paulo IV es elegido papa (hasta 1559); **Carlos V abdica como soberano de los Países Bajos en Bruselas**, que se convierte en capital de Felipe (hasta 1559); Manuel Filiberto, regente de los Países Bajos (hasta 1559); Fernando negocia la Paz Religiosa de Augsburgo, que garantiza la tolerancia a los luteranos en el Imperio.

556 Tregua (febrero) y guerra (julio) con Francia; Carlos abdica como rey de Sicilia; Carlos y sus hermanas parten de los Países Bajos hacia España; Paulo IV declara la guerra (hasta 1557).

557 **Los franceses invaden Italia, pero el duque de Alba fuerza a Paulo IV a firmar la paz; Felipe «en la guerra»: sus tropas vencen en San Quintín** (Saint-Quentin).

558 Los franceses toman Calais a los ingleses; **Felipe otra vez «en la guerra»: sus tropas vencen en Gravelinas** (Grevelingen); Francisco, delfín de Francia, se casa con María Estuardo, reina de Escocia; Carlos abdica como sacro emperador romano, le sucede su hermano Fernando (hasta 1564); **Felipe considera una tregua con el sultán otomano, pero finalmente la rechaza.**

559 **Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis**; muerte de Enrique II de Francia, le sucede Francisco II; Felipe parte de los Países Bajos hacia España y deja a su medio hermana Margarita de Parma como regente (hasta 1567); Felipe autoriza al duque de Medinaceli, virrey de Sicilia, a atacar Los Gelves (Djerba); Pío IV es elegido papa (hasta 1565).

560 Felipe se casa con Isabel de Valois; muere Francisco de Francia, le sucede Carlos IX (Catalina de Médicis,

regente); fracaso de la expedición de Los Gelves.

561 Felipe retira los tercios de los Países Bajos y anuncia su plan de los nuevos obispados.

562 Primera guerra civil francesa (hasta 1563); se reanuda el Concilio de Trento (hasta 1563).

563 Las tropas españolas ayudan a la Corona francesa contra sus súbditos protestantes (hugonotes); guerra comercial inglesa con los Países Bajos (hasta 1565); los turcos sitian Orán.

564 Granvela abandona los Países Bajos; Maximiliano II, elegido sacro emperador romano (hasta 1576), envía a sus dos hijos mayores a España (hasta 1571); expedición del Peñón de Vélez.

565 Las fuerzas de Felipe rompen el asedio otomano de Malta; Pío V es elegido papa (hasta 1572); Isabel de Valois, en compañía del duque de Alba, se encuentra con Catalina de Médicis en Bayona; **Felipe se niega a hacer concesiones en los Países Bajos y los nobles flamencos firman el** *Compromiso*.

566 **La *Petición*, la *Moderación* y furia iconoclasta en los Países Bajos**; Margarita de Parma envía a Montigny y Bergen para asegurarse de que Felipe aprueba la *Moderación*; Felipe decide enviar al duque de Alba con un ejército para restablecer el orden; Solimán muere en la campaña de Hungría y le sucede Selim II (hasta 1578).

567 Segunda guerra civil francesa (hasta 1568); **Alba y su ejército llegan a Bruselas**, Alba sustituye a Margarita de Parma como gobernador general de los Países Bajos, instituye el Consejo de Trublas y arresta a Egmont, Horne y muchos más; en España Felipe arresta al heredero

Hornes y muchos más; en España Felipe arresta al barón de Montigny.

1568 Tercera guerra civil francesa (hasta 1570); Guillermo de Orange y sus hermanos invaden sin éxito los Países Bajos; Alba ejecuta a Egmont, Hornes y otros muchos rebeldes.

1569 Las tropas españolas intervienen a favor de la Corona francesa en su lucha contra los hugonotes; comienza la guerra comercial entre Felipe e Inglaterra (hasta 1573); Felipe exige a Alba que imponga nuevas tasas en los Países Bajos; el taller de Plantino comienza a imprimir la *Biblia Regia.*

1570 Chipre, en poder de Venecia, es invadido por los otomanos; los vasallos de estos toman Túnez; Felipe hace estrangular a Montigny en Simancas; el duque de Alba reforma el sistema legal de los Países Bajos.

1571 El duque de Alba decreta la alcabala en los Países Bajos; España ocupa Finale Ligure y firma la Liga Santa (con Venecia y el papa); los otomanos completan la conquista de Chipre; **don Juan de Austria lleva a la flota de la Liga a la victoria en Lepanto**; Felipe designa al duque de Medinaceli para suceder al duque de Alba como gobernador general de los Países Bajos.

1572 Guillermo de Orange y sus hermanos invaden los Países Bajos y crean una base permanente para los rebeldes en Holanda y Zelanda; Medinaceli llega a los Países Bajos comenzada la revuelta, por lo que Alba continúa en el cargo; **masacre de los hugonotes** en París (Noche de San Bartolomé) y otras ciudades francesas; cuarta guerra civil francesa (hasta 1573); Gregorio XIII es elegido nuevo pontífice (hasta 1585).

1573 Venecia llega a una paz por separado con los otomanos; los españoles toman Haarlem, pero fracasan contra

los españoles toman Haarlem, pero fracasan contra Alkmaar; el duque de Alba, sustituido por don Luis de Requesens (hasta 1576); España vuelve a tomar Túnez, pero rinde Finale Ligure a los comisionados imperiales.

574 Las tropas españolas no logran tomar Leiden y se amotinan; los otomanos toman Túnez y La Goleta; Carlos IX proporciona apoyo financiero a los holandeses, pero muere y le sucede Enrique III; quinta guerra civil francesa (hasta 1576).

575 Negociaciones de paz malogradas en Breda entre Felipe y los holandeses; el decreto de suspensión en Castilla deja sin fondos al ejército español de Flandes.

576 Muere Requesens; **el ejército español en los Países Bajos se amotina y saquea Amberes; la mayoría de las provincias de los Países Bajos firman la Pacificación de Gante con Holanda y Zelanda; se convocan Estados Generales independientes**; don Juan de Austria llega para gobernar los Países Bajos (hasta 1578); Maximiliano II muere y Rodolfo II es elegido sacro emperador romano (hasta 1612); el juicio a Carranza concluye cuando el papa decreta una suspensión de cinco años, para indignación de Felipe, pero Carranza muere poco después.

577 Don Juan llega a una paz con los Estados Generales, pero después la rompe (las hostilidades se prolongan hasta 1607); **Martín de Acuña llega a una tregua informal de un año con los otomanos**; don Juan envía a Juan de Escobedo a Madrid para conseguir fondos; sexta guerra civil francesa (hasta 1578).

578 El duque de Anjou, hermano de Enrique III, manda la ayuda francesa a los Estados Generales; muerte de don Juan; el príncipe de Parma gobierna los Países Bajos en

nombre del rey (hasta 1592); **Juan de Mariiano firma una tregua de un año con los otomanos (prorrogada hasta 1580).**

1579 Negociaciones de paz frustradas en Colonia entre Felipe y los holandeses.

1580 Séptima guerra civil francesa (hasta 1581); Felipe emite el edicto de proscripción contra Guillermo de Orange; tregua de un año con los otomanos.

1581 Tregua de tres años con los otomanos; **los Estados Generales deponen a Felipe y proclaman a Anjou «príncipe y señor de los Países Bajos»**; Anjou, prometido con Isabel de Inglaterra.

1582 Ayuda francesa para la campaña de don Antonio en las Azores.

1583 Parma reconquista los puertos marítimos de Flandes.

1584 Tregua de un año con los otomanos (la última); **Anjou muere** y deja a Enrique de Navarra como presunto sucesor a la Corona francesa, mientras los rebeldes holandeses constituyen una república; **Guillermo de Orange es asesinado**; los católicos franceses, encabezados por Enrique de Guisa, forman una Liga y firman el Tratado de Joinville con España; Parma reconquista la mayor parte de Flandes.

1585 Tratado de Nemours entre Enrique III y la Liga de católicos franceses; Parma reconquista Amberes y la mayor parte de Brabante; Isabel de Inglaterra firma el Tratado de Nonsuch con los Estados Generales; revuelta de Nápoles; Sixto V es elegido papa (hasta 1590).

1586 Octava guerra civil francesa (hasta 1598).

1587 Parma se prepara para invadir Inglaterra.

1588 Parma, listo para invadir Inglaterra; Enrique III huye de

París y la Liga toma el control (hasta 1594); asesinato de Enrique de Guisa; anexión de Saluzzo por el duque de Saboya.

589 **Enrique III es asesinado;** el dirigente hugonote Enrique de Navarra reclama el trono, pero no es reconocido por los católicos; Enrique derrota a la Liga Católica en Arques; Parma propone conversaciones de paz con los holandeses.

590 Enrique derrota a la Liga Católica en Ivry y sitia París; una fuerza expedicionaria española desembarca en Bretaña; Parma rompe el cerco de París; los holandeses, bajo Mauricio de Nassau, comienzan a reconquistar los Países Bajos septentrionales; el duque de Saboya invade Provenza.

591 Revuelta de Sicilia; Parma no cumple las órdenes de Felipe de invadir Francia; negociaciones de paz frustradas en Colonia entre Felipe y los holandeses; Antonio Pérez publica en Pau (Béarn) la primera versión de sus *Relaciones* (revisadas en 1592 y 1598).

592 Fuerza expedicionaria inglesa a Normandía; Parma rompe el sitio de Ruán por Enrique de Navarra, pero muere poco después; Clemente VIII es elegido papa (hasta 1605).

593 Enrique de Navarra se reconvierte al catolicismo.

594 Enrique de Navarra es coronado como rey Enrique IV de Francia y entra en París.

595 Enrique IV declara la guerra a Felipe (hasta 1598) y rechaza a una fuerza española invasora desde Milán.

596 El archiduque Alberto es nombrado gobernador de los Países Bajos españoles (hasta 1599) y toma Calais a los franceses; **Triple Alianza entre Francia, Inglaterra y**

los holandeses contra Felipe.

1597 Felipe expulsa a los judíos de Lombardía.

1598 Enrique IV firma el Edicto de Nantes para acabar con las guerras civiles francesas y la Paz de Vervins para terminar la guerra con España; los españoles abandonan Bretaña y Calais; **Felipe confía la soberanía de los Países Bajos conjuntamente a Alberto e Isabel**; Antonio Pérez publica en París una edición revisada de sus *Relaciones.*

1599 Alberto e Isabel asumen el gobierno en Bruselas (hasta 1621).

1607 Felipe III aprueba un armisticio con los rebeldes holandeses (la Tregua de los Doce Años se acuerda en 1609).

Inglaterra, Escocia y las Américas

1521 Hernán Cortés toma Tenochtitlán y destruye el Imperio azteca.

1522 Carlos V llega al acuerdo de casarse con María Tudor (roto en 1525).

1533 Francisco Pizarro toma Cuzco y destruye el Imperio inca; Enrique VIII repudia a Catalina de Aragón y se casa con Ana Bolena; nace Isabel Tudor.

1534 Enrique VIII pone fin a la obediencia inglesa a Roma (hasta 1554).

1542 Las Leyes Nuevas suprimen las encomiendas en América; Carlos se alía con Enrique VIII para atacar Francia y Escocia; los ingleses derrotan a los escoceses en Solway Moss; Jacobo V muere y su heredera María Estuardo huye a Francia (hasta 1561).

545 Llegan a España noticias de la rebelión pizarrista en Perú.

546 Pedro de la Gasca zarpa desde España para restablecer el orden en Perú.

547 Muere Enrique VIII; Eduardo VI le sucede y promueve el protestantismo en Inglaterra (hasta 1553).

551 De la Gasca regresa a Europa e impresiona a Felipe.

553 Muere Eduardo VI de Inglaterra; **María Tudor le sucede** (hasta 1558) y acaba con la conspiración de la familia Dudley.

554 María aplasta la rebelión de Wyatt y encarcela a su hermana Isabel; **Felipe se casa con María Tudor y reside en Inglaterra (hasta 1555)**; Inglaterra se reconcilia con Roma (hasta 1559); Felipe dispone la liberación de prisión de Robert Dudley e Isabel Tudor; rebelión de Hernández Girón en Perú.

555 Felipe regresa a los Países Bajos (hasta 1557).

557 Felipe regresa brevemente a Inglaterra, hasta la declaración de guerra a Francia y Escocia.

558 Inglaterra pierde Calais; **muere María Tudor y la sucede Isabel (hasta 1603);** María Estuardo se casa con el príncipe heredero francés Francisco.

559 Felipe hace una proposición de matrimonio a Isabel, pero esta la rechaza; **Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis**; Francisco II y María Estuardo se convierten en soberanos conjuntos de Escocia y Francia (hasta 1560), con reclamaciones sobre Inglaterra e Irlanda.

560 El ejército inglés entra en Escocia, consigue la retirada de los franceses (Tratado de Leith) e instaura un régimen protestante; Lope de Aguirre se rebela y pretende el título de rey del Perú (hasta 1561).

561 María Estuardo regresa a Escocia; fracasan las expediciones desde México para colonizar La Florida.

563 Guerra comercial entre Inglaterra y los Países Bajos (hasta 1565).

564 Colonos protestantes franceses se establecen en La Florida.

565 Pedro Menéndez de Avilés captura a los colonos franceses en La Florida, ejecuta a casi todos los hombres, y funda San Agustín; Miguel López de Legazpi reclama las Filipinas para España.

566 Sofocada la conjuración de don Martín Cortés en Nueva España.

567 María Estuardo es derrocada y encarcelada.

568 **María Estuardo escapa y busca refugio en Inglaterra, donde Isabel la encarcela (hasta 1587); la Junta Magna establece nuevas directrices para las posesiones americanas;** nombramiento de los virreyes don Martín Enríquez (Nueva España) y don Francisco de Toledo (Perú); John Hawkins y Francis Drake son derrotados en San Juan de Ulúa; Felipe ordena la retirada del embajador inglés John Man; Isabel captura barcos del tesoro que navegan de España a Flandes.

569 Nueva guerra comercial entre Inglaterra y Felipe (hasta 1573); «rebelión del norte» contra Isabel.

570 Una bula papal declara a Isabel depuesta y excomulgada; Felipe decide aplicarla.

571 **Felipe apoya la «conspiración de Ridolfi» para «matar o prender a la Isabel»**; Legazpi toma Manila; intento de imponer la alcabala en México.

572 Isabel expulsa al embajador español y envía ayuda a los rebeldes holandeses; el virrey don Pedro de Toledo

rebeldes holandeses, el virrey don Pedro de Toledo comienza una campaña contra los últimos reductos incas en Perú.

1573 Restablecimiento parcial del comercio entre Felipe e Isabel.

1574 Paz de Bristol entre Isabel y Felipe.

1575 Felipe acepta el consejo de la Suprema de no permitir a Isabel reabrir la embajada inglesa en España.

1577 Comienza la «circunnavegación» de Drake (hasta 1581); se ordenan las *Relaciones topográficas* para la América española.

1578 El embajador español, Bernardino de Mendoza, regresa a Inglaterra (hasta 1584).

1579 Felipe financia encubiertamente la expedición de Smerwick (Irlanda).

1580 La guarnición de Smerwick se rinde y es ejecutada.

1581 Todas las posesiones portuguesas en América, África y Asia reconocen a Felipe como rey legítimo.

1583 Felipe apoya encubiertamente la conspiración contra Isabel tramada por Throckmorton.

1584 Descubierta la conspiración de Throckmorton; expulsado el embajador Mendoza; se establece una colonia inglesa en Roanoke (hasta 1585); expertos españoles intentan calcular la longitud con observaciones simultáneas de un eclipse lunar en Europa, México, Manila y Macao.

1585 Felipe decreta el embargo de todas las naves inglesas en puertos ibéricos; Drake ataca las posesiones de Felipe en España, las Canarias, Cabo Verde y (en 1586) el Caribe; Isabel firma el Tratado de Nonsuch con los holandeses y envía a Robert Dudley, conde de

Leicester, como gobernador general (hasta 1588); las hostilidades con España se prolongan hasta 1603.

586 La flota inglesa bloquea la costa española; Felipe apoya la conspiración de Babington contra Isabel.

587 Isabel hace ejecutar a María Estuardo; Drake ataca Cádiz y captura un galeón portugués.

588 Isabel y Felipe mandan enviados para negociar la paz en Bourbourg; **la Gran Armada para la Empresa de Inglaterra.**

589 Los ingleses saquean La Coruña y desembarcan tropas en Portugal.

591 La flota inglesa navega por las Azores, se pierde el Revenge; fuerza expedicionaria inglesa a Bretaña (hasta 1595).

592 Fuerza expedicionaria inglesa a Normandía (hasta 1593).

594 Estallido de la rebelión de Tyrone en Irlanda (hasta 1603).

595 Drake y Hawkins dirigen expediciones de envergadura en el Caribe (hasta 1596); la primera flota holandesa zarpa hacia las Indias orientales.

596 **Una expedición angloholandesa captura y saquea Cádiz;** Felipe promete ayuda a la rebelión de Tyrone en Irlanda, pero su flota se ha de retirar por las tormentas.

597 Expedición inglesa a las Azores.

598 Asalto inglés a Puerto Rico; las flotas holandesas navegan hacia las Indias orientales; João de Teixeira compone *La Anatomia de Espanna.*

601 Una fuerza expedicionaria española desembarca en Kinsale (tras rendirse en 1602, los supervivientes

regresaron a La Coruña).

1603 Acaba la rebelión irlandesa; **Isabel I muere; Jacobo VI de Escocia la sucede y ordena el cese de las hostilidades en la guerra contra España.**

1604 **Paz de Londres.**

Abreviaturas utilizadas en este libro

AA: Archivo de la Casa de los Duques de Alba, Biblioteca de Liria, Madrid, con caja y folio

ACA: Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Barcelona

CA: Consell d'Aragó

ACC: Actas de las Cortes de Castilla, 17 vols. (Madrid, 1861-1891)

ACP: Archivo de los Condes de Puñonrostro, Carmona Bobadilla: Papeles de don Francisco de Bobadilla

AGI: Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla

IG: Indiferente General

AGNM: Archivo General de la Nación, México

CRD: Cédulas reales duplicadas

AGPM: Archivo General del Palacio Real, Sección Administrativa, Madrid

CR: Cédulas reales

AGRB: Archives Générales du Royaume/Algemeen Rijksarchief, Bruselas

Audience: Papiers d'État et d'Audience

Gachard: Collection Gachard

AGS: Archivo General de Simancas

CC: Cámara de Castilla

CJH: Consejos y Juntas de Hacienda

CSR: Casas y Sitios Reales

DGT Inv: Dirección General del Tesoro, Inventario Estado: Negociación de Estado

GA: Guerra Antigua

PR: Patronato Real

AHN: Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid

AEESS: Archivo de la Embajada española sobre la Santa Sede

Consejos: Consejos Suprimidos

Inq: Inquisición (con legajo o libro y folio)

OM: Órdenes Militares

AHPM: Archivo Histórico de Protocolos, Madrid

Álava: Don Francés de Álava y Beamonte. Correspondencia inédita de Felipe II con su embajador en París (1564-1570), ed. P. y J. Rodríguez (San Sebastián, 1991)

MDFDE: Mémoires et documents: Fonds divers, Espagne

APO: Archivo Portuguez-Oriental, ed. J. H. de Cunha Rivara, 6 vols. (Nova Goa, 1857-1876)

ARA: Algemene Rijksarchief, La Haya

ARSI: Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Roma

ASC: Archivo de los marqueses de Santa Cruz, Madrid, con caja y expediente

ASF: Archivio di Stato, Florencia

DU: Ducato di Urbino, Clase I

MP: Mediceo del Principato

ASG: Archivio di Stato, Génova

AS: Archivio Segreto

ASMa: Archivio di Stato, Mantua

AG: Archivio Gonzaga

ASMo: Archivio di Stato, Módena

CD AS: Cancellaria ducale, sezione estero, Ambasciatore Spagna

AST: Archivio di Stato, Turín

LM: Lettere Ministri

ASV: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Roma

LP: Lettere principi

NS: Nunziatura Spagna

ASVe: Archivio di Stato, Venecia

SDS: Senato: Dispacci Spagna

BAV: Biblioteca Apostólica Vaticana, Roma

UL: Urbinates Latini

VL: Vaticani Latini

BCR: Biblioteca Casanatense, Roma

BCRH: Bulletin de la Commission royale d'Histoire

BL: British Library, Department of Western Manuscripts, Londres

Addl: Additional Manuscripts

Cott: Cotton Manuscripts

Eg: Egerton Manuscripts

BMB: Bibliothèque Municipale, Besançon

Ms Granvelle: Cabinet des Manuscrits, Collection de Granvelle

BMO: La batalla del Mar Océano, ed. J. Calvar Gross, J. I. González-Aller Hierro, M. de Dueñas Fontán y M. del C. Mérida Valverde, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1988-93)

BNE *Ms:* Biblioteca Nacional de España, Sección de Manuscritos, Madrid

BNF: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Sección de Manuscritos, París

f. f.: Fonds français

Ms. Esp.: Manuscrit espagnol

Bouza, *Cartas: Cartas de Felipe II a sus hijas*, ed. F. J. Bouza Álvarez (2.ª edición, Madrid, 1998)

BPU: Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Ginebra

Favre: Collection Manuscrite Édouard Favre

BR *Ms:* Biblioteca Real, Sección de Manuscritos, Madrid

BRB *Ms:* Bibliothèque Royale/Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Sección de Manuscritos, Bruselas

BSLE *Ms:* Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Manuscritos

BZ: Biblioteca de Zabálburu, Manuscritos, Madrid, con carpeta y folio

CCG: Correspondance du Cardinal de Granvelle 1565-1586, ed. E. Poullet y C. Piot, 12 vols. (Bruselas, 1877-1896)

CDCV: Corpus Documental Carlos V, ed. M. Fernández Álvarez, 5 vols. (Salamanca, 1974-1981)

CMPG: Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme, avec Philippe II, ed. L. P. Gachard, 3 vols. (Bruselas, 1867-1881)

CMPT: Correspondance française de Marguerite d'Autriche avec Philippe II, ed. J. S. Theissen y H. A. Enno van Gelder, 3 vols. (Utrecht, 1925-1942)

CODOIN: Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España, 112 vols. (Madrid, 1842-1895)

CODOIN América: Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas en América y Oceanía (42 vols., Madrid, 1864-1884)

CSPSp: Calendar of State Papers: Spanish, ed. J. A. Bergenroth y otros, 19 vols. (Londres, 1862-1954); y *Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English affairs preserved in, or originally belonging to, the archives of Simancas: Elizabeth*, ed. M. A. S. Hume, 4 vols. (Londres, 1892-1899)

CSPV: Calendar of State papers and manuscripts relating to

English Affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice, ed. H. F. Brown y otros, 38 vols. (Londres, 1864-1947)

DH: Fray Bartolomé Carranza. Documentos históricos, ed. J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, 7 vols. (Madrid, 1962-1994)

DHME: Documentos para la historia del monasterio de San Lorenzo El Real de El Escorial, ed. J. Zarco Cuevas, G. de Andrés y otros, 8 vols. (Madrid, 1917-1962)

Donà: *La corrispondenza da Madrid dell'ambasciatore Leonardo Donà (1570-1573)*, ed. M. Brunetti y E. Vitale, 2 vols. (Venecia-Roma, 1963)

Douais: *Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roi Charles IX en Espagne, 1565-1572*, ed. C. Douais, 3 vols. (París, 1896-1904)

EHR: English Historical Review

Encinas: *Cedulario indiano recopilado por Diego de Encinas* (1596: ed. A. García Gallo, 4 vols., Madrid, 1945-1946)

Epistolario: Epistolario del III duque de Alba, 3 vols., ed. Duque de Berwick y Alba (Madrid, 1952)

FBD: G. Parker, *Felipe II. La biografía definitiva* (Barcelona, 2010)

FCDM AH: Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Archivo Histórico, Toledo

GCP: Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas, ed. L. P. Gachard, 5 vols., (Bruselas, 1848-1879)

GPGP: A. González Palencia, *Gonzalo Pérez, secretario de Felipe II*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1946)

GRM: Retraite et mort de Charles-Quint au monastère de Yuste. Lettres inédites, ed. L. P. Gachard, 3 vols. (Bruselas, 1854-1856)

Gachard, *Voyages: Collection des voyages des souverains des Pays-*

Bas, ed. L. P. Gachard, IV (Bruselas, 1882)

Groen van Prinsterer: *Archives ou correspondance inédite de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, ed. G. Groen van Prinsterer (1.ª serie, 8 vols. y supl., Leiden, 1835-1847; 2.ª serie, I, Utrecht, 1857)

HHStA: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Viena

HSA *Altamira*: Hispanic Society of America, Altamira Manuscript Collection (con caja, pliego y documento), Nueva York

IANTT: Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais, Torre do Tombo, Lisboa

TSO: CG: Tribunal do Santo Oficio: Conselho Geral

IVdeDJ: Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, Colección de manuscritos (con «envío», carpeta y folio), Madrid

KB HS: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Afdeling Handschriften (Colección de manuscritos), La Haya

KML: Karpeles Manuscript Library, Santa Barbara, California

MSP: CR: Medina Sidonia Papers: Cartas de reyes

Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*: Lhermite, Jehan, *Le Passetemps* (publicado por primera vez en Amberes, 1890-1896; trad. española, *Los Pasatiempos*, ed. J. Sáenz de Miera, Aranjuez, 2005)

Longlée: *Dépêches diplomatiques de M. de Longlée, résident de France en Espagne, 1582-90*, ed. A. Mousset (París, 1912)

Maura: *El designio de Felipe II y el episodio de la Armada Invencible*, ed. G. Maura Gamazo, duque de Maura (Madrid, 1957)

MHSI: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu

NA: National Archives (antes Public Record Office), Kew, Inglaterra

SP: State Papers

NMM: National Maritime Museum, Colección de Manuscritos, Greenwich, Inglaterra

OÖLA: Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, Linz

KB: Khevenhüller Briefbücher

Oria: *La Armada Invencible. Documentos procedentes del Archivo General de Simancas*, ed. E. Herrera Oria (Archivo Histórico Español, II; Valladolid, 1929)

PEG: Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle, ed. C. Weiss, 9 vols. (París, 1841-1852)

RAG AB: Rijksarchief Gelderland, *Archief van het Huis Berg*, Arnhem

RAH: Real Academia de la Historia, Colección de Manuscritos, Madrid

Riba: *Correspondencia privada de Felipe II con su secretario Mateo Vázquez 1567-1791*, ed. C. Riba García (Madrid, 1959)

Serrano: *Correspondencia diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede durante el pontificado de san Pío V*, ed. L. Serrano, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1914)

Sigüenza: José de Sigüenza, *La fundación del Monasterio de El Escorial* (1605: Madrid, 1988)

TMLM Ms: The Morgan Library and Museum, Nueva York, con manuscrito o número de registro

TR: El Arzobispo Carranza. «Tiempos Recios», ed. J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, 4 vols. (Salamanca, 2003-2007)

UB Leiden *HS Pap*: Universiteitsbibliotheek, *Afdeling Handschriften Papieren* (Colección de manuscritos), Leiden

Fuentes y bibliografía

Esta biografía hace abundante uso de seis grandes categorías de fuentes primarias, algunas impresas pero la mayoría todavía disponible únicamente en formato manuscrito.

1. La Colección Altamira

Hacia 1860, José María Osorio de Moscoso, decimosexto conde de Altamira, heredó los archivos de varias familias nobles españolas, con lo que se creó la que quizá sea la más rica colección privada de documentos del reinado de Felipe II. Esta incluye los documentos de los secretarios privados de Felipe: Antonio Gracián y Dantisco (1571-1576), Mateo Vázquez de Leca (1573-1591) y Jerónimo Gassol (m. 1605). Los secretarios privados manejaron tres tipos distintos de documentos para el rey: su correspondencia con sus ministros sobre una amplia variedad de asuntos; cartas y memoriales dirigidos «al rey en su mano»; y archivos dejados por otros ministros al morir, comenzando por los del cardenal Espinosa, a quien Vázquez había servido como secretario. En algún momento, el conde duque de Olivares (valido de Felipe IV) se dio cuenta de la importancia de estos documentos y se apropió de ellos. Los papeles pasaron más tarde a los condes de Altamira, incluidos los archivos de muchos de los ministros de Felipe II, incluidos don Luis de Requesens, don Juan de Zúñiga, el marqués de Velada y el duque de Sessa.

El desastre tuvo lugar en 1869: con el fin de pagar las deudas del último conde de Altamira, sus testamentarios celebraron una almoneda de su colección de pinturas, armaduras, reliquias y libros, así como de su archivo. Afortunadamente, el bibliófilo madrileño José Sancho Rayón salvó todos los papeles que pudo. Convenció a los banqueros vascos Mariano y Francisco de Zabálburu para que adquirieran

miles de documentos y, hoy en día, toda la colección conservada en la Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu ha sido digitalizada, de modo que cada uno de sus folios puede ser consultado, ampliado, retocado y, si se desea, impreso en la sala de lectura anexa a la biblioteca.[938] Por su parte, Guillermo de Osma también adquirió varios miles de documentos del archivo de Altamira, que depositó en el Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, que él mismo había fundado en Madrid. Esta colección también ha sido digitalizada y ahora es posible hacer búsquedas en toda ella por nombres, temas y fechas.[939] Otras dos personas adquirieron partes significativas de la Colección Altamira en 1870, aunque las enviaron enseguida al extranjero. Frédéric Disdier, cuñado del último conde, vendió más de doscientos volúmenes a la British Library (que entonces era la biblioteca del Museo Británico), donde se catalogaron como *Additional Manuscripts* 28.334-28.503 y 28.262-28.264. Paul Chapuys, bibliotecario del último conde de Altamira, se llevó consigo varios miles de documentos más a su Ginebra natal y, cuando murió, estos pasaron a un amigo, quien los donó a la Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de la ciudad.[940]

Hasta hace muy poco, se creía que estas cuatro colecciones contenían el grueso de los papeles de Altamira. Sin embargo, Sancho Rayón se guardó más de tres mil documentos y, al morir en 1900, el marqués de Jerez de los Caballeros no solo adquirió la magnífica colección de libros antiguos de Sancho Rayón, sino también «varios paquetes de papeles viejos». Dos años después, el marqués vendió los libros y esos «papeles viejos» al conocido hispanista estadounidense Archer M. Huntington, quien los depositó en su caja fuerte en la Hispanic Society of America, que había fundado en Nueva York. Tras la muerte de Huntington, esos fondos pasaron a formar parte de la colección de la Hispanic Society, aunque permanecieron sin catalogar hasta 2012, cuando un importante donativo de la

Andrew Mellon Foundation permitió a Bethany Aram, Rachael Ball, y a mí mismo, clasificar, identificar y catalogar las treinta y dos cajas con los papeles de Altamira conservadas en la Hispanic Society.[941]

La dispersión de los papeles de Altamira significó que algunos documentos hayan desaparecido, quizá para siempre, mientras que el resto está esparcido entre varios lugares y países. Esto crea dos problemas. En primer lugar, el volumen de la colección que ha sobrevivido sigue siendo prodigiosa: Carlos Riba García editó aproximadamente la mitad de los billetes intercambiados entre Felipe II y Mateo Vázquez contenidos en un solo volumen de los doscientos que ocupa la Colección Altamira en la British Library, lo que proporciona únicamente una pincelada de la colección, y aun así ocupó 436 páginas impresas. La publicación de toda la Colección Altamira ocuparía, a buen seguro, más de un millar de volúmenes.[942] En segundo lugar, la dispersión implica que los diversos billetes escritos por Felipe a sus ministros en un mismo día pueden encontrarse repartidos en, como mínimo, cinco archivos, aunque, con frecuencia, unos documentos se refieran a otros. Por tanto, una carta o consulta dirigida al rey puede hallarse hoy en Ginebra, mientras que el billete de Mateo Vázquez está en Londres y la respuesta de Felipe en Madrid o Nueva York. La redacción de unas concordancias modernas de la Colección Altamira es una de las necesidades más urgentes a las que se enfrentan los historiadores de Felipe II en la actualidad.

2. Los archivos de los consejos centrales

La Colección Altamira reúne sobre todo documentos intercambiados entre Felipe y sus consejeros sobre asuntos importantes para él: los historiadores deben buscar en otras partes los papeles intercambiados sobre otros temas. La mayoría de las consultas enviadas por los catorce consejos centrales para

informarle, así como las cartas e informes enviados al rey por sus ministros desde cualquier lugar del mundo, se conservan actualmente tal y como, de acuerdo con el tema, se detalla a continuación:

- *Consejo de Estado* (AGS *Estado*). Esta sección está organizada geográficamente, con una subsección para cada país europeo gobernado por el rey (Aragón, Castilla, Países Bajos, Milán, Nápoles, Sicilia, etcétera) o por otros (Inglaterra, Francia, Alemania, Portugal, Roma, Saboya, etcétera), además de «Armadas y Galeras» (sobre la flota mediterránea) y «Despachos diversos» (que incluyen numerosos registros de la correspondencia expedida por el secretario real).
- *Consejos de Italia* (Nápoles, Sicilia, Milán, Cerdeña) desde 1554-1555, *Portugal* desde 1582 y Países Bajos (*Flandes*) desde 1588; todos los documentos correpondientes a estos territorios se encuentran hoy en el AGS, en la sección *Secretarías Provinciales*, que reúne la correspondencia administrativa regular.
- *Consejo de Guerra:* la sección *Guerra Antigua*, en el AGS, contiene los papeles relacionados con la defensa de España por tierra y mar, incluidos los relativos a los presidios del norte de África y, después de 1580, a la defensa de Portugal.
- *Consejo de Hacienda*: las cartas y papeles dirigidos al rey «en manos del secretario de Hacienda», y las consultas sobre estos, forman las secciones del AGS *Consejos y Juntas de Hacienda*. Las cuentas revisadas de aquellos que desembolsaron fondos gubernamentales o que hicieron préstamos al gobierno se encuentran en cuatro secciones del AGS: *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas, Contaduría del*

Sueldo, Contadurías Generales y Dirección General del Tesoro.

- *Consejo de Indias*: la sección *Indiferente General* del AGI, en Sevilla, custodia muchas de las consultas de este consejo al rey.[943] La correspondencia del consejo con los virreyes y otros funcionarios en América está organizada geográficamente (AGI *México, Perú*, etcétera); los documentos sobre sus responsabilidades judiciales forman la sección del AGI *Justicia*.
- *Consejo de Castilla* (Consejo Real): los papeles y cartas referentes a asuntos internos de Castilla se encuentran hoy divididos entre las secciones AHN (Madrid) *Consejos Suprimidos*, AGS *Patronato Real*, AGS *Patronato Eclesiástico* y AGS *Cámara de Castilla* (estas tres últimas guardan también muchos papeles importantes sin relación con el consejo, como los testamentos de la familia real).
- *Consejo de Aragón*: ACA (Barcelona) *Consejo de Aragón*.
- *Consejo de las Órdenes*: AHN *Órdenes Militares*.
- *Consejo de la Inquisición*: AHN *Inquisición*.[944]
- *Junta de Obras y Bosques*: sus papeles están repartidos entre AGS *Casas y Sitios Reales* y AGP *Sección histórica* (*Cédulas reales*, 2-9, contiene diez mil páginas de copias de cédulas reales emitidas por esta Junta entre 1548 y 1598). La sección AGS *CSR* custodia también las cuentas de las casas de los miembros de la familia real, empezando en 1535 con los registros (AGS *CSR* 36) de la Casa del Príncipe Felipe.

Ninguna de estas secciones está completa. En 1559 se hundió el barco que llevaba a España, desde los Países Bajos, los registros administrativos del rey desde que abandonó la península cinco años antes; muchos documentos importantes

posteriores a 1559 forman parte de la Colección Altamira; otros muchos han acabado en secciones equivocadas.[945] Algunos documentos fueron saqueados por los franceses en el siglo XIX (aunque, por orden expresa de Adolf Hitler, las autoridades devolvieron, durante la ocupación alemana, la mayor parte a Simancas en 1942).[946] Finalmente, por más que Felipe y los archiveros de Simancas se esforzaron por reunir los documentos oficiales de sus consejeros cuando estos morían, no siempre lo consiguieron *(véase sección 4 más abajo).*

El Portal de Archivos Españoles (PARES), creado en 1992 con el nombre de Archivos Españoles en Red (AER), proporciona acceso por Internet a miles de documentos del reinado de Felipe II conservados en diversos archivos públicos de España. Gracias a un proceso de digitalización, es posible acceder a ellos desde cualquier lugar, por ejemplo, Columbus (Ohio), y leerlos o imprimirlos, sin necesidad de una tarjeta de identificación, y de manera gratuita, incluso cuando el archivo que custodia los originales está cerrado.[947]

Cada territorio de ultramar gobernado por Felipe poseía sus propias instituciones y generaba su propio archivo, lo que permite a los historiadores estudiar la aplicación de las directrices del rey en la periferia, pero, por desgracia, en este caso las pérdidas también ha sido enormes. Los archivos de varias instituciones en Nápoles y Milán que guardaban correspondencia con Felipe fueron destruidos, total o parcialmente, durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial; por su parte, las instituciones españolas creadas en los Países Bajos por el duque de Alba y sus sucesores apenas han dejado ningún rastro en los archivos anterior a 1596, excepto en el caso del Consejo de Trublas (AGRB *Raad van Beroerten*). En México, por el contrario, dos fondos documentales conservados en el AHNM muestran cómo actuaba el poder real en una de las principales avanzadas de la monarquía de Felipe. Los nueve

volúmenes iniciales de la sección *Mercedes* (llamados apropiadamente *Libros de Gobierno*) contienen copias certificadas de, al parecer, todas las órdenes al virrey anteriores a 1570, muchas de las cuales repiten una carta o cédula real en la que se pide la adopción de medidas. Por otra parte, los tres primeros volúmenes de la sección *Cédulas reales duplicadas* listan cientos de órdenes enviadas por Felipe II a sus oficiales, sobre todo al virrey a la Audiencia, a veces con una nota sobre la medida adoptada. El Historical Archive de Goa, capital de la India portuguesa, guarda asimismo prácticamente todas las cartas recibidas de Felipe en las décadas de 1580 y 1590 (archivadas en los *Livros das Monções*); sin embargo, los documentos conservados arrojan poca luz tanto sobre la ejecución de sus órdenes como sobre los debates políticos en Goa relativos al modo de gobernar enclaves que, durante su reinado, abarcaban desde Sofala hasta Nagasaki.

3. La correspondencia del rey con su familia

Carlos V y su hijo intercambiaron muchas cartas entre 1543, cuando Felipe (según dijo él mismo más tarde) comenzó a gobernar, y la muerte del emperador en 1558; pero la mayor parte se ocupaban únicamente de asuntos oficiales. En ocasiones Carlos escribía de su propia mano, y a menudo añadía una posdata ológrafa, pero los temas tratados raramente incluían detalles personales. En *CDCV* se publicó la mayor parte de estos intercambios, mientras que los de 1556-1558 se hallan en *GRM*. Hay una sola excepción importante: las instrucciones secretas de Carlos a su hijo en mayo de 1543. El manuscrito Ms B 2955 de la Hispanic Society of America, en Nueva York, contiene los originales de ambas partes, con una extensión total de 48 folios, todos ellos escritos (y concienzudamente corregidos) del puño y letra del emperador, de modo que es el documento más largo que jamás redactó.

Ball y Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, han realizado una edición crítica de este importante documento.

Los detalles personales abundan en las cartas ológrafas de Felipe a su tía María de Hungría, a su hermana María y al marido de esta, Maximiliano, todas las cuales se conservan en Viena; en las cartas ológrafas de María a su hermano Felipe (que este anotó), custodiadas en la biblioteca del palacio de Liria, en Madrid; en su correspondencia con su primo Manuel Filiberto de Saboya y, en menor medida, con su yerno Carlos Manuel de Saboya.[948] Aunque Felipe hizo referencias a las cartas que intercambiaba con sus esposas, prácticamente todas se han perdido. Sabemos que, después de morir María Tudor, el rey felicitó a su agente en Inglaterra por haber «quemado las [cartas] que la reyna tenía mías», y probablemente también ordenó lo mismo cuando murieron las demás. Solo han sobrevivido dos cartas personales de una de sus esposas, sendos borradores escritos por María Tudor. Felipe también escribió a menudo a sus suegras, Catalina de Portugal y Catalina de Médicis, pero aún no disponemos de una recopilación de estas cartas, como tampoco de las que dirigió a otros soberanos. Rayne Allinson dató y estudió las cartas de Felipe a su cuñada, Isabel Tudor, dos de ellas ológrafas.[949]

Las cartas más reveladoras dirigidas por el rey a su familia son las que envió a sus hijas, Isabel Clara Eugenia (nacida en 1566) y Catalina Micaela (nacida en 1567). Fernando Bouza publicó las 133 cartas conservadas, que Felipe escribió mientras estaba separado de sus hijas; y aunque el rey quemó las cartas que le enviaron sus hijas durante su estancia en Portugal, conservó cuidadosamente las que recibió de Catalina cuando esta abandonó España en 1585, así como los borradores de muchas de sus respuestas.[950]

J. I. Tellechea Idígoras publicó toda la correspondencia

personal de Felipe con su «padre espiritual», el papa, en dos series: *Felipe II y el Papado*, que contiene casi quinientas cartas escritas por el rey durante su reinado, muchas de ellas ológrafas, y *El Papado y Felipe II*, con casi 550 breves papales ológrafos dirigidos al rey, la mayoría de ellos en latín y algunos (posteriores a 1566) en italiano.

4. Papeles de los principales ministros

Varios de los ministros de Felipe guardaron su correspondencia con el rey.

- *Don Juan de Zúñiga y don Luis de Requesens*. Aunque los testamentarios de ambos hermanos cumplieron sus órdenes de quemar a su muerte los documentos confidenciales, han dejado la mayor colección privada de «papeles de estado» del reinado: más de ochocientos legajos y libros de documentos. Muchos de los documentos de los hermanos pasaron a formar parte de la colección Altamira *(véase sección 1 más arriba)*.[951] Además, la mayoría de sus documentos familiares, incluidos los de su padre, el mayordomo real don Juan de Zúñiga y Avellaneda, se encuentra en la actualidad en el Arxiu del Palau dels Requesens, en Molins de Rei (Barcelona).[952]
- *Cardenal Granvela*. El cardenal murió en Madrid en 1586 y dejó un extenso archivo. Muchos de sus documentos están divididos hoy entre la BMB y la BR Madrid, aunque otros muchos archivos (sobre todo AGS y las diferentes partes de la colección Altamira) guardan importantes lotes de las cartas del cardenal, mientras que AGRB *Manuscrits divers* 5459 y 5460 custodian centenares de billetes de Granvela al rey y a los miembros de la Junta de Noche entre 1579 y 1584.[953]

- *El tercer duque de Alba*. La casi totalidad del amplio archivo del duque, del que solo se ha publicado una parte, se conserva en la biblioteca de sus descendientes en la biblioteca del palacio de Liria, en Madrid.[954]
- *El séptimo duque de Medina Sidonia*. Aunque la mayoría de las cartas y papeles del séptimo duque se guarda en el archivo ducal de Sanlúcar de Barrameda, la Karpeles Manuscript Library, en Santa Barbara (California), custodia tres volúmenes de *Cartas Regias* comprendidas entre 1587 y 1593, junto con otro mucho material de esos años.[955]
- *El primer duque de Feria.* Veintinueve cartas escritas completamente de puño y letra de Felipe al conde de Feria entre enero de 1558 y mayo de 1559, que constituyen el ejemplo más temprano de la costumbre de Felipe de desahogarse en cartas dirigidas a sus confidentes, se encuentran en la Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Toledo, *Archivo Histórico* 166 R-7.
- *Margarita de Parma y su hijo Alejandro Farnesio.* Los archivos dejados por la hermana y el sobrino de Felipe han sido víctimas de una doble tragedia: una gran parte de la correspondencia acabó en el Archivio di Stato en Nápoles, donde la mayoría fue quemada por soldados alemanes en 1943; sin embargo, las transcripciones hechas por los historiadores belgas Louis-Prosper Gachard y Léon van der Essen aún se conservan. El resto de los documentos, en el Archivio di Stato, en Parma, ha sufrido graves daños a causa de la humedad y hoy muchos de ellos resultan difícilmente legibles.[956]
- *Andrea y Juan Andrea Doria.* Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, reúne cientos de cartas enviadas por el rey y

sus ministros a sus principales almirantes en el Mediterráneo entre 1552 y 1598 (Vargas-Hidalgo imprimió también otras cartas y documentos enviados por los Doria al rey hasta 1573).

- Felipe ordenó a sus testamentarios que quemaran los billetes de sus confesores, fray Diego de Chaves y Diego de Yepes, «escritos de ellos para mí, y de mí para ellos»; aparentemente, solo se han conservado tres originales (uno de Chaves y dos de Yepes), pero su tono agresivo es muy revelador (y explica por qué el rey se preocupó de destruir el resto).[957]

Tres de los ministros del rey escribieron obras autobiográficas, todas ellas impresas, que ofrecen valiosas perspectivas sobre cómo trabajaba Felipe II.

- Poco después de partir al exilio tras el fracaso de la revuelta de Aragón en 1591, *Antonio Pérez* publicó *Un pedazo de historia de lo sucedido en Zaragoza* en Pau, cuartel general de Enrique IV. La volvió a publicar con adiciones en 1592, con el título *Pedazos de historia o relaciones*. En 1598, en París, poco después de conocer la muerte de Felipe, publicó otra versión más extensa, *Relaciones de Antonio Pérez*, junto con un segundo volumen titulado *Cartas de Antonio Pérez*. Ambos disfrutaron de gran éxito, sin duda porque incluían el contenido de muchas consultas intercambiadas con Felipe, en las que el rey aparecía como un tirano caprichoso, embustero, mezquino, vengativo y bastante obtuso. Por desgracia para los historiadores, todas las ediciones presentan el mismo defecto: Pérez «editó» muchos de los documentos que publicó con el fin de que

corroborasen su afirmación de que Felipe lo había incriminado en el asesinato de Juan de Escobedo. Nada de lo publicado por Pérez es fiable a no ser que se pueda comprobar independientemente.[958]

- *Don Luis de Requesens* escribió o dictó una *Vida* que proporciona un autorretrato sincero, que comienza con sus recuerdos de haber crecido como compañero de juegos y paje del príncipe, que acaba en 1570.[959]
- *Diego de Simancas*, en su *Vida y cosas notables*, escrito entre 1577 y 1583 (año de su muerte), muestra tres aspectos del mundo de Felipe II: primero, revela inconscientemente la vanidad, los prejuicios y las facciones que emponzoñaban la corte; segundo, cuenta «desde dentro» detalles de las reuniones (dónde se sentaba cada consejero y cómo emitían sus votos); finalmente, reproduce los pormenores de sus conversaciones con el rey.[960]

Además, Bartolomé de Carranza colaboró estrechamente con Felipe en Inglaterra y los Países Bajos entre 1554 y 1558, año en que regresó a España como arzobispo de Toledo. Al año siguiente la Inquisición arrestó a Carranza acusado de herejía, y fue sometido a un largo proceso del que se hizo una completa transcripción entre 1559 y 1567, cuando el papa Pío V remitió el caso a Roma. El difunto profesor José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras publicó 334 documentos de esa transcripción escritos hasta la primavera de 1563. Aunque el propio rey y unos sesenta de sus cortesanos habían jurado no revelar la lucha entre facciones que había causado la caída de Carranza, estos documentos proporcionan detalles sobre la vida en la corte de Felipe en Inglaterra y en los Países Bajos, un periodo en el que faltaron documentos oficiales.[961]

5. Correspondencia diplomática

Doce gobiernos mantuvieron embajadores residentes en la corte de España durante todo el reinado: el emperador, el papa, Ferrara, Francia, Génova, Lucca, Mantua, Parma, Saboya, Toscana, Urbino y Venecia. Además, Inglaterra tuvo un enviado residente hasta 1568, así como Portugal hasta 1580. Los despachos e informes de estos diplomáticos subsanan los vacíos en los archivos gubernamentales que se conservan y también proporcionan vívidos detalles sobre aquellos que tomaban las decisiones. Los despachos de unos pocos embajadores se han publicado por extenso: en el caso de Francia, los de Laubespine (1559-1562), Saint-Sulpice (1562-1565), Fourquevaux (1565-1572) y Longlée (1582-1591); en cuanto a Venecia, los de Donà (1570-1573).[962] Además, los resúmenes de todas las cartas de los agentes ingleses en la corte de Felipe anteriores a 1558 están disponibles en *Calendar of State Papers Foreign: Elizabeth* (15 volúmenes, hasta 1585, año en que el estallido de la guerra cerró prácticamente la península a los diplomáticos de Isabel);[963] mientras que las cartas de los enviados venecianos en el extranjero (así como las deliberaciones del Senado) que incluyen materiales relacionados con la Inglaterra isabelina ocupan los volúmenes VI a IX de los *Calendar of State Papers Venetian*.

Otras muchas fuentes diplomáticas están disponibles en formato impreso. Las relaciones finales entregadas al Senado por cada embajador veneciano tras su regreso del extranjero, algunas de las cuales ocupan más de un centenar de páginas impresas, han sido publicadas en dos ocasiones: una, de forma caprichosa e incompleta, en el siglo XIX, y otra en una edición completa de *Relazioni*, a cargo de Luigi Firpo, organizada por países: el volumen VIII de la colección de Firpo recoge las relaciones entregadas por todos los enviados venecianos a la

corte de Felipe entre 1557 y 1598. Luciano Serrano imprimió toda la correspondencia diplomática entre Roma y Madrid del periodo 1565-1572; Anna Maria Voci editó numerosos despachos del nuncio Niccolò Ormanetto (1572-1577) relativos a don Juan de Austria y la Empresa de Inglaterra; Natale Mosconi hizo lo propio con otros muchos del nuncio Cesare Specciano (1586-1588), mientras que Tellechea Idígoras publicó los de Camillo Caetani (1594-1598).[964]

La publicación de los despachos del longevo embajador imperial de ese periodo, Adam Dietrichstein (1563-1573) —conservados en el Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv de Viena, con material adicional del Rodinný Archiv Ditrichšteinu custodiado en los archivos estatales moravos de Brno—, comenzó en fechas recientes. Strohmayer, *Korrespondenz*, ofrece las 126 cartas conservadas (la mayoría en alemán, aunque algunas están escritas en español o latín) de la correspondencia entre Dietrichstein y la corte imperial entre 1563 y 1565. Dado que Dietrichstein ejerció no solo como embajador sino también como ayo de los archiduques Rodolfo y Ernesto en la corte de España, sus despachos son inusualmente personales e interesantes. Los de su sucesor, Hans Khevenhüller (1574-1606), siguen inéditos (mientras que la mayoría de los originales se conserva en Viena, sus propios registros de las cartas enviadas se guardan en el Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv de Linz); pero su detallado diario ha sido impreso tanto en alemán como en su traducción española.[965]

En cuanto al resto, los despachos diplomáticos de los archivos de Florencia (relativos a Toscana y en parte a Urbino), Génova, Lucca, Mantua, Módena (relativos a Ferrara), Parma, Turín (relativos a Saboya), el Vaticano (relativos a los nuncios y también en parte a Urbino) y Venecia continúan inéditos. También lo están los del embajador francés Jehan de Vivonne, señor de Saint-Gouard (1572-1582) y los del portugués

Francisco Pereira, que, quizá por ser tío de Ruy Gómez, parece tener mejor información que cualquier otro diplomático en la corte de España.[966]

6. Testimonios directos

El rey se negó a escribir sus propias memorias y, después de 1559, no encargó biografías, dos cosas que su padre sí hizo, aunque permitió que tres testigos directos de sus primeros viajes publicaran otras tantas relaciones:

- El viaje de Felipe desde España a los Países Bajos, a través de Italia y Alemania, en 1548-1549 fue descrito minuciosamente por Vicente Álvarez (la primera edición es de 1551) y Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella (1552). Calvete de Estrella, *El felicíssimo viaje* (ed. P. Cuenca, Madrid, 2001) incluye ambas relaciones y también reproducciones en color de los arcos triunfales erigidos en Amberes para dar la bienvenida al príncipe, así como de otras obras de arte encargadas para celebrar el viaje.
- Andrés Muñoz, *Viaje de Felipe II a Inglaterra*, un breve folleto publicado originalmente en Zaragoza en 1554, fue reimpreso por Pascual de Gayangos (Madrid, 1877) junto con otros documentos relacionados con el reinado de Felipe I de Inglaterra.

Once personas más que conocieron a Felipe directamente recogieron numerosos detalles personales y anécdotas sobre él, aunque ninguna de ellas los publicó en vida del rey.[967] Siete fueron legos —tres historiadores, tres funcionarios de la corte y un diplomático— y el resto, monjes de El Escorial:

1. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, preceptor de Felipe, compiló la *Historia de Felipe II, rey de España*, que abarcaba desde

1556 a 1564 (la primera edición se publicó en 1780); el original latino y su traducción española se incluyeron en sus *Obras Completas*, IV (Pozoblanco, 1998).

2. Juan de Verzosa, responsable de los archivos españoles en Roma, escribió *Anales del reinado de Felipe II*, que abarca desde 1554 a 1565, publicado por J. M. Maestre Maestre (Madrid, 2002).
3. En 1585 Felipe invitó a Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas a «que fuese mirando cómo se podría escribir su gloriosa vida, y después de varias réplicas pareció que por mayor modestia se hiciese mediante una historia general del mundo que comienza en el año 1559». La *Historia general del mundo del tiempo del señor rey don Felipe II, el Prudente* de Herrera, que comienza efectivamente en 1559 y dedica más de mil páginas al resto del reinado, se publicó en tres volúmenes entre 1601 y 1606. El epíteto «el Prudente» lo sugirió Herrera.[968]
4. Jehan Lhermite, ayuda de cámara de Amberes, escribió *Le Passetemps*, que abarcaba de 1587 a 1602, con varias ilustraciones de la vida cortesana tal como la veía [véase lámina 24] y [véase lámina 42].
5. Luis Cabrera de Córdoba creció en la corte, donde también había servido su padre, y después de 1585 participó en algunos de los hechos que describe en su *Historia de Felipe II* (Madrid, 1619, para el periodo anterior a 1583; 4 vols., Madrid, 1876, con la segunda parte reproducida de una copia; la obra completa se reimprimió en 3 vols., Salamanca, 1998).
6. Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, uno de los médicos del rey, hizo imprimir en 1604 su *Elogio a las esclarecidas virtudes*, que ocupaba casi trescientas páginas e incluía varios

poemas (entre ellos un soneto de Lope de Vega).

La única historia del rey escrita por un diplomático que lo conoció personalmente todavía sigue inédita:

7. En 1600 Orazio della Rena, secretario de la embajada toscana en Madrid, completó un elogioso *Compendio della vita di Filippo Secondo Re di Spagna*. Su manuscrito, de setecientas páginas, fue la primera historia completa del Rey Prudente: su amo, el Gran Duque, prohibió su publicación.[969]

Los cuatro monjes de El Escorial que dejaron relaciones escritas de todo el tiempo pasado con Felipe fueron:

8. Fray Juan de San Jerónimo, *Memorias*, que abarcan de 1563 a 1592. Fueron publicadas, aunque sin muchas de las ilustraciones del original, en *CODOIN*, VII.
9. Fray Antonio de Villacastín, *Memorias*, que van de 1562 a 1594: una breve relación del maestro de obras de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, que habló regularmente con el rey cara a cara, publicada en *DHME*, I, 11-96.
10. Fray Juan de Sepúlveda, *Historia de varios sucesos y de las cosas notables que han acaecido en España, y otras naciones, desde el año de 1584 hasta el de 1603*, publicada en *DHME*, IV. Dado que el manuscrito conservado está desordenado y lleno de errores, Julián Zarco Cuevas, su editor, lo reorganizó según un orden estrictamente cronológico. Aunque es repetitivo en ocasiones, Sepúlveda

proporcionó un retrato de Felipe más humano que el de cualquier otro trestigo directo (salvo, quizá, Lhermite): en su relación, el rey caza, ríe, asiste a comedias, come con los monjes y siempre muestra una «extraña curiosidad» por las personas y las cosas.

11. Fray José de Sigüenza, *La fundación del Monasterio de El Escorial* (volumen III de su *Historia del Orden de San Gerónimo*, 1605), trata la relación del rey con El Escorial a lo largo de su reinado, aunque él solo fue testigo directo de los hechos que narra a partir de 1575. Sigüenza tuvo acceso, sin duda, a las relaciones escritas por los otros tres frailes, a los que en ocasiones cita literalmente (aunque sin mencionarlos).

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CCG, véase Poullet.

CDCV, véase Fernández Álvarez, *Corpus.*

CMPG, véase Gachard*, Correspondance.*

CMPT, véase Theissen, *Correspondance.*

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En 1966, viajé desde Simancas a Madrid, donde trabajé en la Biblioteca Nacional, el Archivo Histórico Nacional y el Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan. He vuelto a cada uno de ellos repetidamente desde entonces y también he realizado investigaciones en el Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos

Exteriores, así como en la Biblioteca Real, la Real Academia de la Historia, el Archivo de la Casa de los Duques de Alba, el Archivo de la Casa de los Marqueses de Santa Cruz y la Biblioteca de Zabálburu (antes Archivo de la Casa de la Condesa Viuda de Heredia Spínola). En cada uno de estos lugares encontré no solo documentos fascinantes, sino también sabios archiveros y bibliotecarios. Recuerdo con especial gratitud la amabilidad de Pedro Longás Bartibas, Gregorio de Andrés y María Ángeles Santos Quer en el Instituto de Valencia; a Juan Manuel Calderón en el Archivo de Alba, y a Mercedes Noviembre en la Biblioteca de Zabálburu.

Mis investigaciones también me llevaron a importantes colecciones de manuscritos en Austria (el Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, en Viena, y el Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, en Linz); Bélgica (principalmente el Algemeen Rijksarchief y la Koninklijke Bibliotheek en Bruselas); Francia (en especial la Bibliothèque Nationale y el Archive du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères en París y la Bibliothèque Municipale de Besançon); Gran Bretaña (especialmente la British Library, la Biblioteca de la Universidad de Cambridge y la Bodleian Library); Italia (los Archivi di Stato de Florencia, Génova, Lucca, Mantua, Milán, Módena, Nápoles, Parma, Turín y Venecia, así como la Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana y el Archivio Segreto Vaticano en Roma); los Países Bajos (la Koninklijke Bibliotheek y el Algemeen Rijksarchief en La Haya y la Universiteitsbibliotheek de Leiden); Suiza (la Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Ginebra); y los Estados Unidos (la Hispanic Society of America en Nueva York, la Karpeles Manuscript Library en Santa Barbara, California, y la Lilly Library en Bloomington, Indiana). En todos estos centros, así como en otros numerosos archivos de Europa y América, encontré no solo fascinantes documentos sino también, de nuevo, expertos archiveros y bibliotecarios. Recuerdo con particular gratitud a Lucienne van

Meerbeeck, Hugo de Schepper y Ernst Persoons en el Algemeen Rijksarchief de Bruselas; a David y Marsha Karpeles de la Karpeles Manuscript Library de Santa Barbara; a los condes de Puñonrostro en Madrid y Carmona; y a Mitchell Codding, John O'Neill y Patrick Lenaghan de la Hispanic Society of America. Todos ellos me permitieron trabajar con los documentos de sus colecciones con total libertad, algo por lo que les estoy profundamente agradecido.

Las indagaciones en archivos no son baratas. Las becas y subvenciones del Christ's College de Cambridge, la Academia Británica, la Universidad de Saint Andrews, el Leverhulme Trust, el Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland y (gracias a Fernand Braudel) el Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique financiaron gran parte de mi investigación sobre Felipe II hasta 1986; la Universidad de Illinois, la Universidad de Yale, la Andrew W. Mellon Foundation y tanto el Departamento de Historia como el Mershon Center de la Ohio State University han subvencionado desde entonces mis posteriores investigaciones. Estoy profundamente agradecido a todos ellos.

También estoy agradecido a los amigos que me han ayudado con la logística de la investigación, especialmente a partir de 1987, cuando mis problemas de movilidad comenzaron a limitar mi propia capacidad de viajar y husmear por los estantes. Bethany Aram, Fernando Bouza, José Luis Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero y Santiago Martínez Hernández localizaron y me consiguieron copias de más documentos en archivos españoles y portugueses de lo que nadie podía esperar. Maurizio Arfaioli localizó y resumió los despachos enviados por los embajadores italianos en la corte de Felipe II. Alison Anderson desmenuzó y tradujo los perspicaces informes del embajador imperial Hans Khevenhüller, escritos en una difícil mezcla de alemán, latín y español. Clara García Ayluardo me

ayudó a ver a Felipe II con ojos mexicanos y me condujo a importantes documentos que jamás habría encontrado por mí mismo. Muchos de mis estudiantes de doctorado me han salvado de quedar atrapado en el aluvión de datos sobre Felipe II: David Coleman y Edward Tenace en la Universidad de Illinois; Paul Allen, Tonio Andrade, Martha Hoffman-Strock, Michael Levin y Frank Rocca en Yale; y Rachael Ball, Robert Clemm, Cameron Jones, Andrew Mitchell, Andrea Smidt y Leif Torkelsen en la Ohio State University. Sandy Bolzenius, también estudiante en la OSU, tuvo la generosidad de leer por mí las pruebas de la edición original.

Quiero dar las gracias también a otros muchos colegas que me han proporcionado referencias y sugerencias vitales, y a los que han leído partes (o la totalidad) de este texto a lo largo de los años: Cristina Borreguero Beltrán, Fernand Braudel, John B. Bury, Fernando Jesús Bouza Álvarez, James S. Coonan, Maria Pau Domínguez, Simon Groenveld, Juan M. Hernández, Ricardo de la Huerta, Henry Kamen, Helli Koenigsberger, Alberto Marcos Martín, Rosemarie Mulcahy, Tristan Mostert, Giovanni Muto, Angela Parker, Peter Pierson, Glyn Redworth, Luis Ribot García, Christopher Riley, Mario Rizzo, María José Rodríguez-Salgado, Felipe Ruiz Martín y Nancy van Deusen. Además, debo agradecer especialmente su inspiración y su ayuda a mis condiscípulos de sir John Elliott: James Amelang, Peter Bakewell, Peter Brightwell, James Casey, Edward Cooper, Robert Evans, Xavier Gil, Charles Jago, Richard Kagan, David Lagomarsino, Albert Lovett, Linda Martz y Tony Thompson, a los que se suman seis estudiantes de Richard Kagan («los nietos de Elliott» si se prefiere): Antonio Feros, Fernando González de León, Guy Lazure, Kimberly Lynn, Maria Portuondo y Magdalena Sánchez. He sido muy afortunado de contar en el equipo editorial de Planeta con Ana Bustelo, Isabel Sbert, Laura Verdura, Lucía Álvarez y

Juan Antonio Diego de la Vega. Aunque mis cuatro hijos —Susie, Ed, Richard y Jamie— han pasado «más tiempo con Felipe II que con cualquier otro hombre», como su padre, les estoy muy agradecido por su amor, apoyo y paciencia.

Por último, me gustaría rendir homenaje a cinco personas sin las cuales no existiría este libro: sir John Plumb, Ana Bustelo, Cameron Jones, Ruth MacKay y sir John Elliott.

Sir John Plumb me encargó la predecesora de esta biografía. Lo conocí en 1961, cuando me entrevistó para mi ingreso en el Christ's College, en Cambridge, para estudiar Historia. No me podía imaginar entonces la influencia que llegaría a tener en mi vida académica. Durante mi formación universitaria, él fue mi maestro y me enseñó, a través de sus propios escritos y de su docencia, los principios a los que aún aspiro hoy en día. Plumb nunca «soltaba» a sus estudiantes y convenció al consejo rector de Christ's College para que me concediese varias becas, las cuales me permitieron investigar para mi tesis durante quince meses en archivos europeos, y después me eligió para disfrutar de otra beca de investigación de cuatro años, que me dio la oportunidad de volver a los archivos y recopilar datos para convertir mi tesis en un libro y, al mismo tiempo, comenzar a investigar de cara a futuras obras, tres de las cuales me encargó él mismo: *España y la rebelión de los Países Bajos, Europa en crisis. 1598-1648* y *Felipe II*, publicado originalmente por Little, Brown en su colección Library of World Biography en 1978. Sin la iniciativa de Plumb, probablemente jamás habría escrito una biografía de Felipe II y, de haberlo hecho, sería muy diferente.

Ana Bustelo y yo trabajamos juntos por primera vez en 1988, cuando tradujo un artículo mío al español. Después editó una colección de mis ensayos, *El éxito nunca es definitivo*, y en 2007 sugirió que había llegado el momento de revisar mi

Felipe II, escrito treinta años antes. Ana disimulaba con elegancia su decepción a medida que el descubrimiento de nuevos materiales me hacía retrasarme cada vez más con respecto al calendario que habíamos convenido, y respecto al hecho de que el texto de *Felipe II. La biografía definitiva*, fuera cinco veces más largo que su predecesor. Después de que fuera publicado, Ana me pidió una versión más corta: una con un aparato crítico más ligero, y con la mitad del texto original. Me pareció relativamente sencillo adelgazar el aparato crítico, pero fui incapaz de eliminar la mitad del texto. Por suerte, Cameron Jones, de la Ohio State University, y Ruth MacKay, de Stanford, asumieron esa ardua tarea y recortaron mi texto sin piedad. No podría haber elaborado este libro sin ellas, y sigo fascinado por su habilidad editorial.

Mi deuda final la comparto con todos aquellos que estudian la temprana historia moderna de España. Conocí a J. H. Elliott en 1964 cuando este pronunciaba un ciclo de conferencias dentro de un curso de licenciatura en Cambridge. En una de ellas expuso una idea que encontré inmensamente atractiva: cómo Felipe II utilizó el llamado Camino de los Españoles para acabar con la revuelta holandesa por la fuerza, y más tarde me ayudó a convertirla en el tema de mi tesis doctoral. Durante los últimos cincuenta años, ha sido una fuente constante de inspiración, apoyo y buenos consejos y le saludo con con gratitud, admiración y afecto.

GEOFFREY PARKER

Cambridge-St. Andrews-Urbana-New Haven-Columbus,
1966-2015

Convenciones utilizadas en este libro

Moneda

En este libro, todas las sumas de dinero se expresan en ducados de 375 maravedíes, cuyo valor fue aproximadamente el mismo que el de un escudo durante la mayor parte del reinado de Felipe II. Un ducado valía entonces algo más de dos florines, moneda de Flandes, mientras que algo más de cuatro ducados equivalían a una libra esterlina.

Fechas y tiempo

La mayor parte de Europa empleó el «calendario juliano», según el cual cada año comenzaba el 25 de marzo, hasta que en 1582 el papa Gregorio XIII ordenó que el calendario se avanzara diez días y que cada año comenzase el 1 de enero. Cada país adoptó el calendario gregoriano (o «estilo nuevo») en un momento diferente: España el 4/15 de octubre de 1582, y la mayoría (pero no todas) de las provincias holandesas rebeladas contra Felipe II el 14/25 de diciembre de 1582. Inglaterra no lo hizo hasta 1753. Para evitar confusiones, a menos que se indique explícitamente lo contrario, en este libro todas las fechas posteriores al 4/15 de octubre de 1582 se dan según el calendario gregoriano, incluso en el caso de reinos que, como Inglaterra, continuaron usando el calendario juliano. Así, Felipe II calculó que su Gran Armada entró en el canal de la Mancha el 30 de julio de 1588, mientras que sus adversarios ingleses estimaron que ello ocurrió diez días antes. En este libro, sucedió el 30 de julio.

He hecho abundante uso de los despachos de los embajadores italianos, que solían indicar el paso del tiempo según un reloj de veinticuatro horas que comenzaba media hora después de la puesta de sol (a las «ore 23.30» cada día, independientemente de la estación del año). En 1581 un

diplomático italiano contaba que las Cortes de Tomar, las cuales reconocieron a Felipe II como rey de Portugal, comenzaron «cerca de las cuatro de la tarde, según el uso de aquí, que en nuestra Italia son las 21 horas».[971] En este libro, la ceremonia comenzó a las 4 de la tarde.

Listado de láminas e ilustraciones

1. Retrato de Felipe II. Frontispicio de Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas para su *Historia general del mundo del tiempo del rey Felipe II*, 1599. AHN, *Consejos* 4416/101.

2. Felipe como niño y como muchacho. Antonio de Honcala, *Pentaplon christianae pietatis* (Alcalá de Henares, 1546). Biblioteca de la Universidad de Granada, A-029-170.

3. Carlos V asiste a un juego de cañas con su esposa y su familia. Jan Cornelius Vermeyen, *Carolus Quintus imperator, rex, charissime conjugi Isabella auguste gravide in agro Toletani*, 1539. Photographic Survey, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Londres. Colección privada.

4. Felipe garabatea sus libros. *Emblemata et instrumenta bellica* y *Crónica del sancto rey don Fernando tercero*. Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Y-II-21 fol. 3v. y 29-V-7, fol. V.

5. Felipe escribe a su tía María de Hungría. HHStA Belgien P. A. 60 Konvolut 4 fol. 132v., Felipe a María de Hungría, 12 de diciembre de 1544.

6. Una justa en la plaza de una ciudad. Miniatura de *Les heures de Notre-Dame* (c. 1549). Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1.er, Ms. II, 158, fol. 6v.

7. Dibujo de un arco triunfal erigido en Amberes para dar la bienvenida a Felipe en 1549. «Arcus Publicus, ad Divi Michaelis», en Cornelius Schryver, *Spectaculorum in susceptione Philippi* (Amberes, 1550), fol. 53r.

8. Esbozo de Carlos V (1555), por Jacques le Boucq, para una colección de retratos. Bibliothèque Municipale, Arras, Francia, Ms. 266/72.

9. Antonio Moro, *Felipe II en la jornada de San Quintín, c.* 1560. Patrimonio Nacional, Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El

Escorial.

10 y 11. Felipe corrige sus documentos, 1576. © The British Library Board (BL *Addl.* 28,357/136); HSA *Altamira* 1/III/22, cortesía de The Hispanic Society of America, Nueva York.

12. Marco Vercellio, *Felipe recibe en audiencia a Leonardo Donà, embajador de la República de Venecia, c*. 1600. Pinacoteca, Palazzo Donà dalle Rose, Venecia.

13. Pierre Perret, frontispicio del libro de Luis Cabrera de Córdoba *Historia de Felipe II, rey de España*, 1619. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

14. Relicarios en El Escorial. Patrimonio Nacional, Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

15 y 16. Las dos páginas iniciales de la *Biblia Regia. Biblia Sacra Hebraice, Chaldaice, Graece & Latine* (8 vols., Amberes, 1569-1773), vol. I. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

17. Wouter Crabeth, *Vidriera del Rey* (1557-1559). Iglesia de San Juan, Gouda (Holanda), 1557-1559.

18. Hieronymus Wierix, *Cristo concede a Felipe las insignias del poder*, 1585. BRB, Cabinet des Estampes, A.1511.

19. Felipe sorprendido con un rosario. Sofonisba Anguissola, *Felipe II, c*. 1575. Museo del Prado. White Images / Scala, Florence.

20. Felipe corrige los planos de sus arquitectos, 1561-1562. AGS *MPD* XL-1.

21. Fabrizio Castello, *El Escorial en construcción*, 1576. Hatfield House, Inglaterra.

22. Pompeo Leoni, grupo escultórico del cenotafio de Felipe y su familia en El Escorial, 1597-1600. Patrimonio Nacional, Basílica del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El

Escorial.

23. Felipe recorta un pasaje ofensivo de un documento sobre El Escorial, 1571. AGS *CC* 409/26.

24. Jehan Lhermite, «La torre del filósofo» y la destilería de El Escorial, c. 1600. BRB Ms. II.1028: Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*, en *Revue d'histoire de la pharmacie*, 1933, vol. 21, n.º 84, p. 207.

25. Hans de Evalo, uno de los relojes del despacho de Felipe, 1583. Patrimonio Nacional, Colecciones Reales, El Candil.

26. Felipe responde bajo juramento a las cuestiones remitidas por el arzobispo Carranza, 1560. RAH Ms. 9/1804, Proceso Carranza, vol. XII, fol. 83v. © Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid.

27. Las habitaciones de Felipe con vistas al Alcázar de Madrid. Anton van den Wyngaerde, «El Alcázar de Madrid», c. 1565. Österreichisches Nationalbibliothek, Viena, Austria, Cod. Min. 41.

28. Felipe II cifra sus propios documentos, 1567. AA 5/69, Felipe a Alba, 7 de agosto 1567. Archivo de los Duques de Alba.

29. Sofonisba Anguissola, *Isabel de Francia, reina de España*, 1565. Museo Nacional del Prado.

30. Anónimo, *Bautizo del príncipe Fernando el 16 de diciembre de 1571*. Por cortesía de la Colección Khevenhüller, en Burg Hochosterwitz Museum (www.burg-hochosterwitz.com).

31. Tiziano, *Felipe II ofreciendo al cielo al infante don Fernando* o *La ofrenda de Felipe II*, 1572-1733. Museo Nacional del Prado.

32. Anónimo, *Felipe II, sus hijas Isabel y Catalina, y el*

príncipe Felipe, 1583-1584. Por cortesía de la Hispanic Society of America, Nueva York.

33. Alonso Sánchez Coello, *Sor Margarita de la Cruz*, 1585. Patrimonio Nacional, Convento de las Descalzas Reales.

34. Felipe sentencia a muerte a Gabriel de Espinosa, el «pastelero de Madrigal», que pretendía ser el rey Sebastián de Portugal, 1595. AGS *Estado* 173/271.

35. Don Carlos ordena al embajador español en Roma que compre parte del Santo Prepucio, 1567. IVdeDJ 38/4.

36. «Finanzas para niños», un intento de explicarle los problemas fiscales a Felipe, 1574. IVdeDJ 76/491.

37. Alonso Sánchez Coello, *Felipe en su coronación como rey de Portugal*, 1581. De Agostini Picture Library / G. Costa / Bridgeman Images.

38. Niccolò Granello y Fabrizio Castello, *La batalla de la Tercera*. Patrimonio Nacional, Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Sala de Batallas.

39. El emblema de la monarquía de Felipe tras la unión de las coronas: «El mundo no basta». Museu Numismático Portugués, Lisboa, Inv. 2918.

40. Alonso Sánchez Coello, *Felipe II*, 1587. Galleria Palatina, Palacio Pitti, Florencia. Photo Scala, Florencia, por cortesía del Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali.

41. El estado de cuentas semanal: Felipe decide qué pagos se atenderán y cuáles deberán esperar por falta de fondos, 1589. AGS *CJH* 219.

42. «La Jornada de Tarazona», en Jehan Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*. BRB Ms. II.1028.

43. Alonso Sánchez Coello, *Felipe II*, 1588. Patrimonio Nacional, Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

44. «La silla de gota de Felipe II», en Jehan Lhermite, *Le*

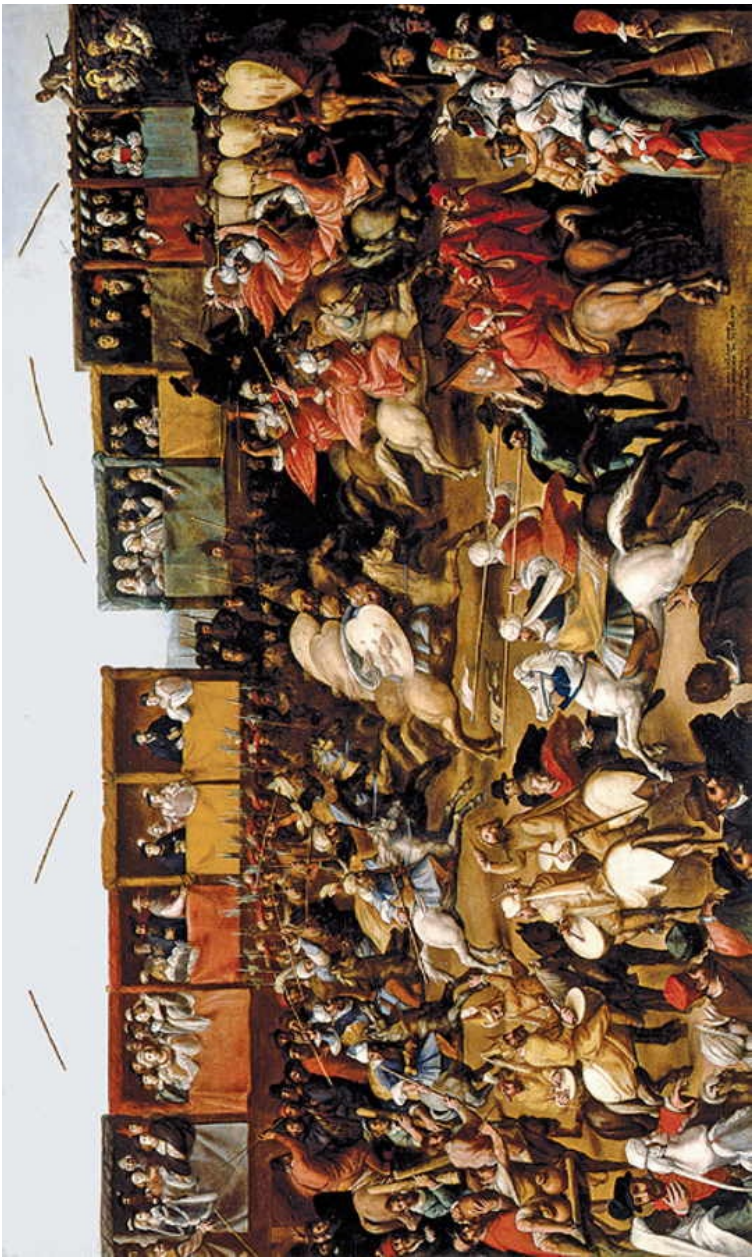
Passetemps. BRB Ms. II.1028.

45. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *La visión de fray Julián de Alcalá, c*. 1645. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts / Bridgeman Images.

PHILIPVS. II. HISPANIARVM INDIARVM Q
REX CATHOLICVS COGNOMENTO PRVDENS. M. M
SIC MANEBAT
INTVENDO RELIGIONEM IVSTITIAM EXERCENDO CONSTANTER
HONESTE Q VIBENDO EXCELLVIT.

1. Frontispicio propuesto para la *Historia general del mundo del tiempo del rey Felipe II,* de Antonio Herrera y Tordesillas. Cuando Herrera pidió permiso para publicar su obra en 1599, envió un boceto de Felipe que combina virtudes tanto clásicas como cristianas —al igual que Hércules, el difunto rey estrangula a una serpiente (la herejía)—, mientras que la simetría y la compostura de su cuerpo reflejan la perfección de la creación de Dios. La leyenda superior incluye el epíteto «el Prudente» por primera vez [pagina 16].

2. Felipe como niño y como muchacho, en *Pentaplon christianae pietatis*, de Antonio de Honcala. Este tratado devocional, impreso en 1546 y dedicado a Felipe, utiliza la letra griega épsilon para mostrar la elección entre el vicio y la virtud a la que el príncipe se enfrenta en su viaje por la vida. Los cambios en la vestimenta reflejan el paso de la niñez a la vida adulta, al tiempo que proporcionan las imágenes más antiguas del príncipe que se conocen. En una de ellas, Felipe juega con un pájaro canor sujeto a una cuerda [página 32].

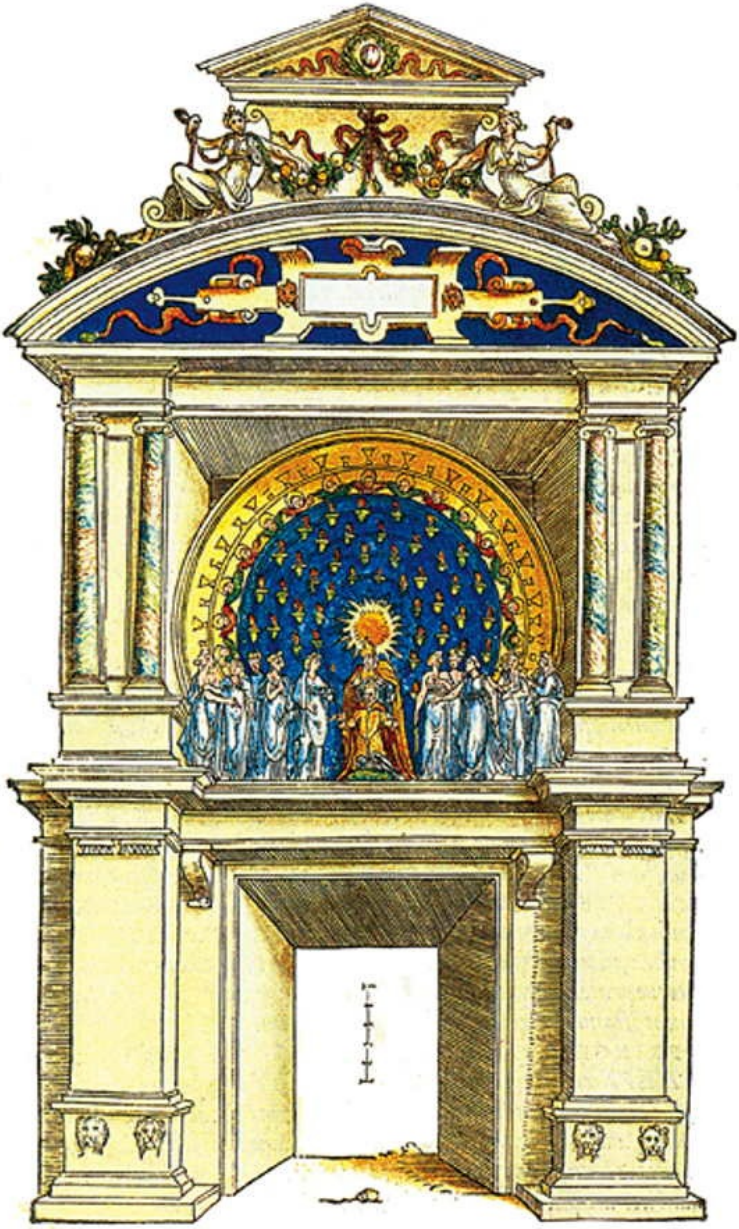


3. Carlos V asiste a un juego de cañas con su esposa y su familia, de Jan Vermeyen, 1539. Felipe, con casi doce años de edad, y sus hermanas observan el espectáculo atentamente (segundo aposento a la izquierda a partir del centro) desde la tribuna levantada a las afueras de Toledo, en marzo de 1539, para celebrar el embarazo de la emperatriz. Seis semanas más tarde, Isabel de Portugal había muerto [página 33].

4. Felipe garabatea sus libros, 1540-1541. A los catorce años, Felipe utilizó su pluma, su pincel y sus pinturas para dibujar en los márgenes de una crónica que describía los actos heroicos de su predecesor, san Fernando, rey de Castilla [página 41].

5. Felipe escribe a su tía María de Hungría, en diciembre de 1544. A los diecisiete años, la característica caligrafía enmarañada de Felipe ya era reconocible, con líneas que se solapaban entre sí y la abreviatura de numerosas palabras, como en la última frase: «de v[uest]ra al[teza], de V[a]ll[adoli]d, a XII de dez[iembr]e 1544» [página 52].

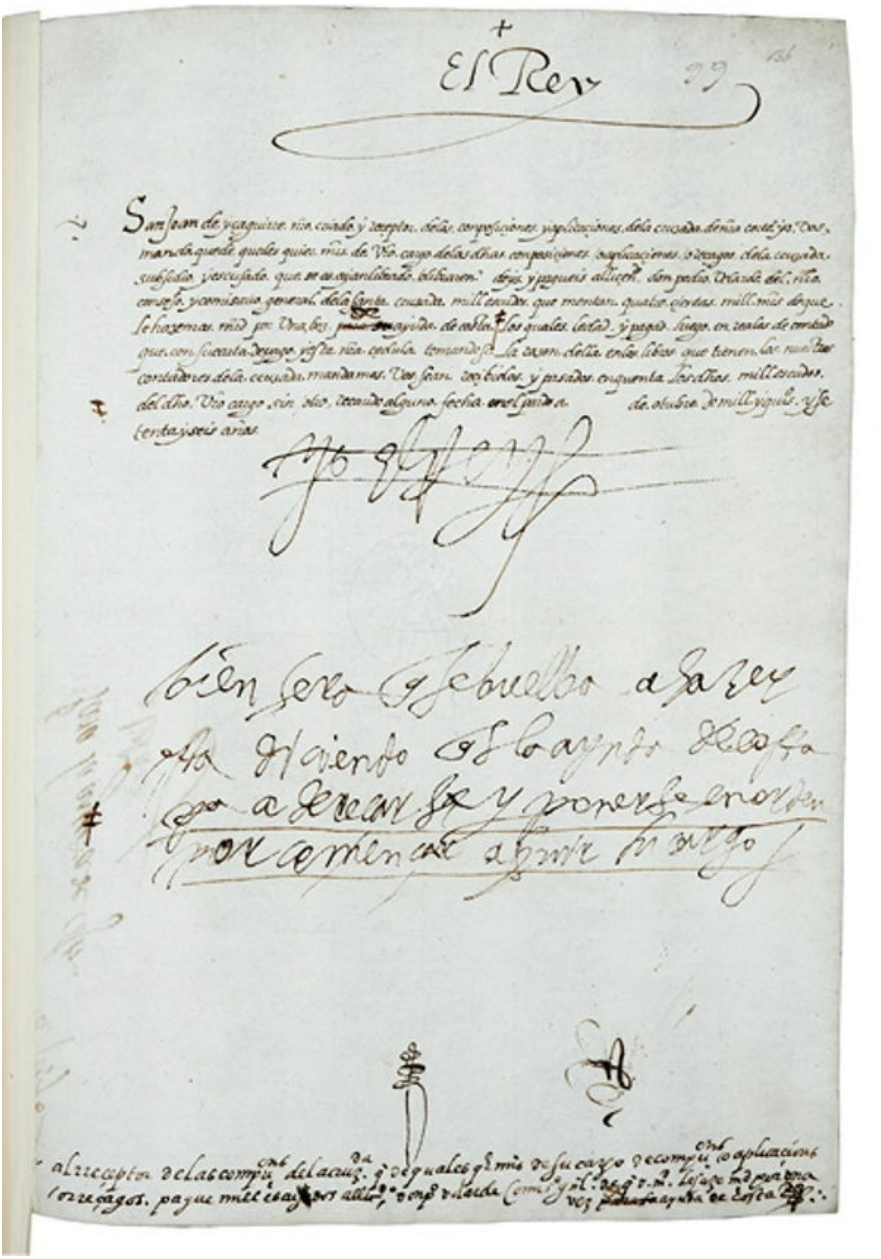
6. Una justa en la plaza de una ciudad, c. 1549. Este trepidante torneo público bien podría mostrar al príncipe Felipe (con penacho blanco) en Bruselas en mayo de 1549, cuando compitió contra don Luis de Requesens, cuya lanza «lo derribó al suelo», donde quedó aturdido. Los espectadores esperaban con impaciencia los errores o accidentes de los contrincantes, así como cualquier acto de valentía o de astucia inusual [página 62].



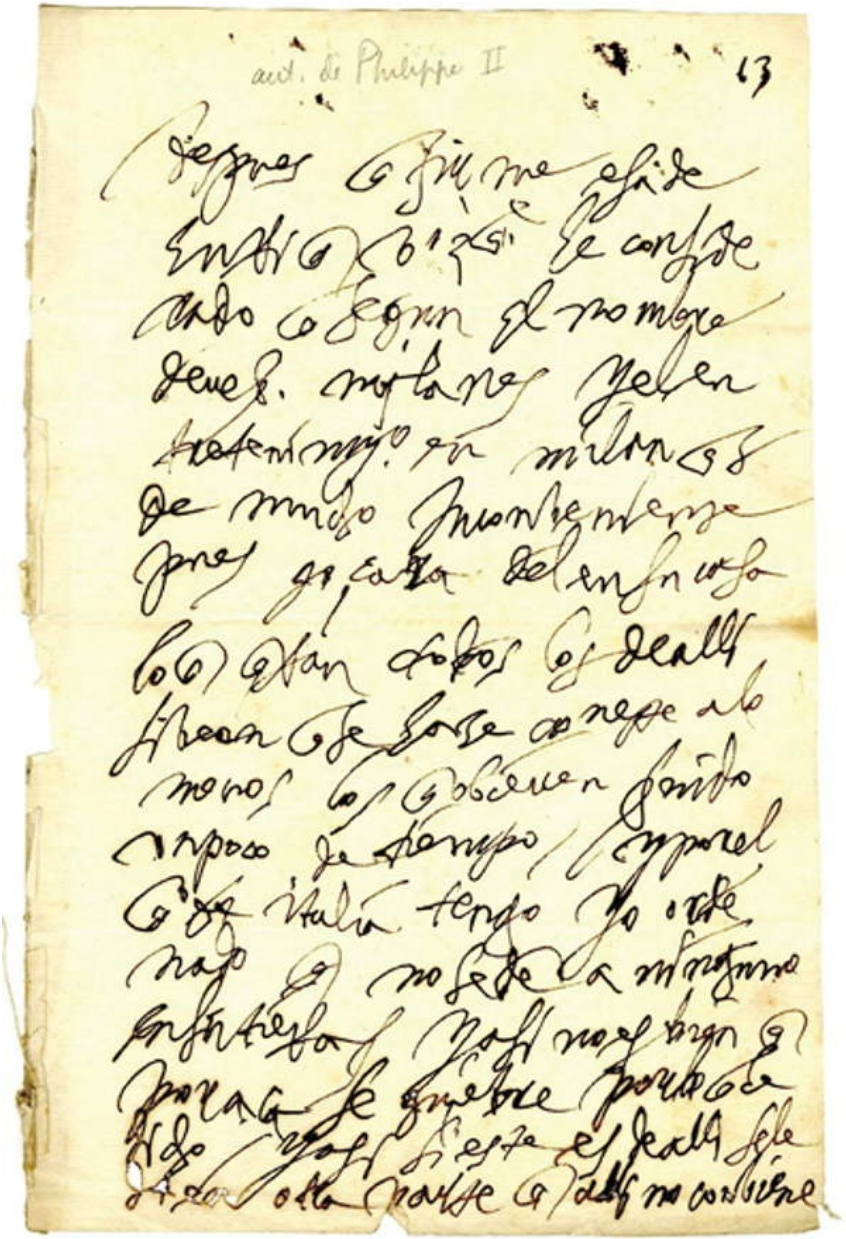
7. Dibujo de un arco triunfal erigido en Amberes para dar la bienvenida a Felipe en 1549. En el tímpano, Dios mismo corona al joven príncipe [página 64].

8. Esbozo de Carlos V, de Jacques le Boucq, 1555. Le Boucq, heraldo de la orden del Toisón de Oro, asistió al último capítulo de la orden presidido por Carlos V —una de las pocas ocasiones en 1555 en las que el emperador apareció en público— y probablemente hizo este llamativo bosquejo inmediatamente después [página 78] [a lámina 43].

9. *Felipe II en la jornada de San Quintín*, de Antonio Moro, c. 1560. El rey sostiene su bastón de mando y viste la armadura, decorada con la cruz de Borgoña y una imagen de la Virgen María, que llevaba durante el asalto a San Quintín en 1557. Durante más de una década, esta pintura sirvió como «retrato oficial» y de ella se hicieron numerosas copias [página 82].



10 y 11. Felipe corrige sus documentos, 1576. Un día después de que el rey hubiese estampado su estampilla (el equivalente de un tampón de goma) en una orden rutinaria para reembolsar mil escudos a un funcionario, se dio cuenta de que la razón del pago se había omitido. Por tanto, tachó su firma, escribió la frase que debía añadirse y lo devolvió al secretario para que la revisara. Tal vez lo más notable sea que, después de haber firmado una orden que autorizaba una recompensa en Milán para Enrique Visconti, el rey añadiera que «según el nombre debe ser milanés» y, por tanto, si se le concedía a este, «todos los de allí» querrían lo mismo. De modo que Felipe dio instrucciones para que «si este es de allí, se le dé en otra parte». Cientos de documentos como este requerían la firma del rey todas las semanas —en ocasiones, incluso cada día—, y parece asombroso que fuera capaz de detectar este tipo de errores y ambigüedades [página 98]



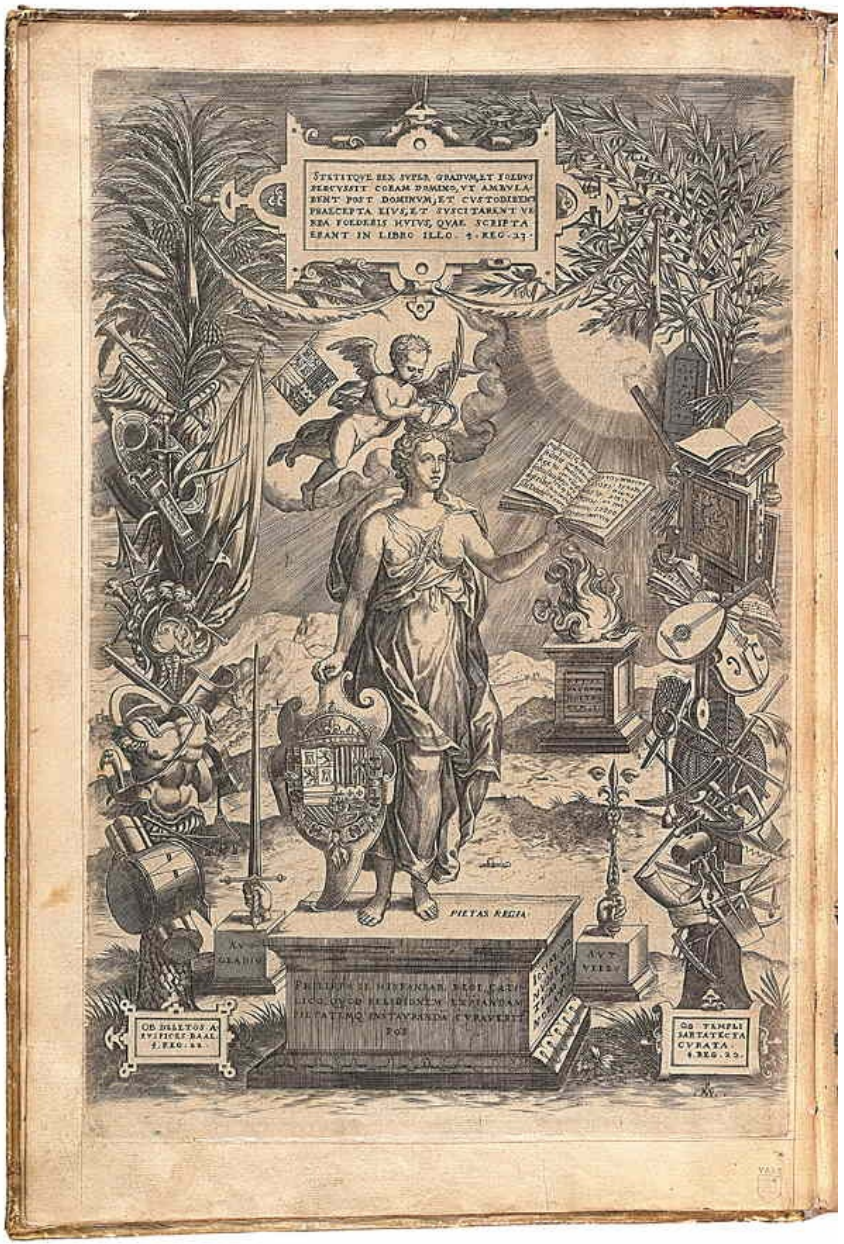
10 y 11. Felipe corrige sus documentos, 1576. Un día después de que el rey hubiese estampado su estampilla (el equivalente de un tampón de goma) en una orden rutinaria para reembolsar mil escudos a un funcionario, se dio cuenta de que la razón del pago se había omitido. Por tanto, tachó su firma, escribió la frase que debía añadirse y lo devolvió al secretario para que la revisara. Tal vez lo más notable sea que, después de haber firmado una orden que autorizaba una recompensa en Milán para Enrique Visconti, el rey añadiera que «según el nombre debe ser milanés» y, por tanto, si se le concedía a este, «todos los de allí» querrían lo mismo. De modo que Felipe dio instrucciones para que «si este es de allí, se le dé en otra parte». Cientos de documentos como este requerían la firma del rey todas las semanas —en ocasiones, incluso cada día—, y parece asombroso que fuera capaz de detectar este tipo de errores y ambigüedades [página 98]

12. *Felipe recibe en audiencia a Leonardo Donà, embajador de la República de Venecia*, de Marco Vecellio, c. 1600. Donà fue nombrado embajador de Venecia en España en 1570, a la edad de treinta y tres años, y permaneció en la corte más de tres años. De acuerdo con el protocolo cortesano, Felipe permanece de pie mientras escucha al embajador (que fue quien encargó esta pintura); pero Donà, quien posteriormente transcribió cada palabra del rey, apenas recibió una frase cortés como respuesta, quizá porque, según sus propias palabras, Felipe tendía a desconectar durante las audiencias [página 113].

13. Grabado de Pierre Perret que sirvió de portada para la *Historia de Felipe II, rey de España*, de Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, en 1619. El autor, que entró al servicio del rey en 1595 y lo vio con frecuencia, coloca El Escorial como fondo del enfrentamiento entre Felipe, con armadura y sosteniendo la espada para proteger a la Virgen María, y los enemigos de la Iglesia católica. El lema «La primera prioridad es la religión» separa a los protagonistas [pagina 115].

14. Uno de los armarios de los relicarios en El Escorial, con algunas de las reliquias de la gran colección de Felipe II. El custodio de las reliquias en El Escorial afirmó que la colección real incluía al menos un fragmento de los huesos de cada santo conocido, excepto tres. Aunque solo una fracción de la colección original ha sobrevivido, los estuches dorados que contienen distintas partes del cuerpo de los santos, debidamente certificadas, aún se conservan [página 120].

15 y 16. Las dos páginas iniciales de la *Biblia Regia*. La magnífica *Biblia Regia* (o *Políglota de Amberes*), impresa en Amberes bajo la dirección del rey en 1569, comienza proclamando el deseo de Felipe de publicar una versión de las Escrituras que todos los cristianos —protestantes, ortodoxos y católicos— pudieran aceptar como definitiva [página 125] y [página 153].

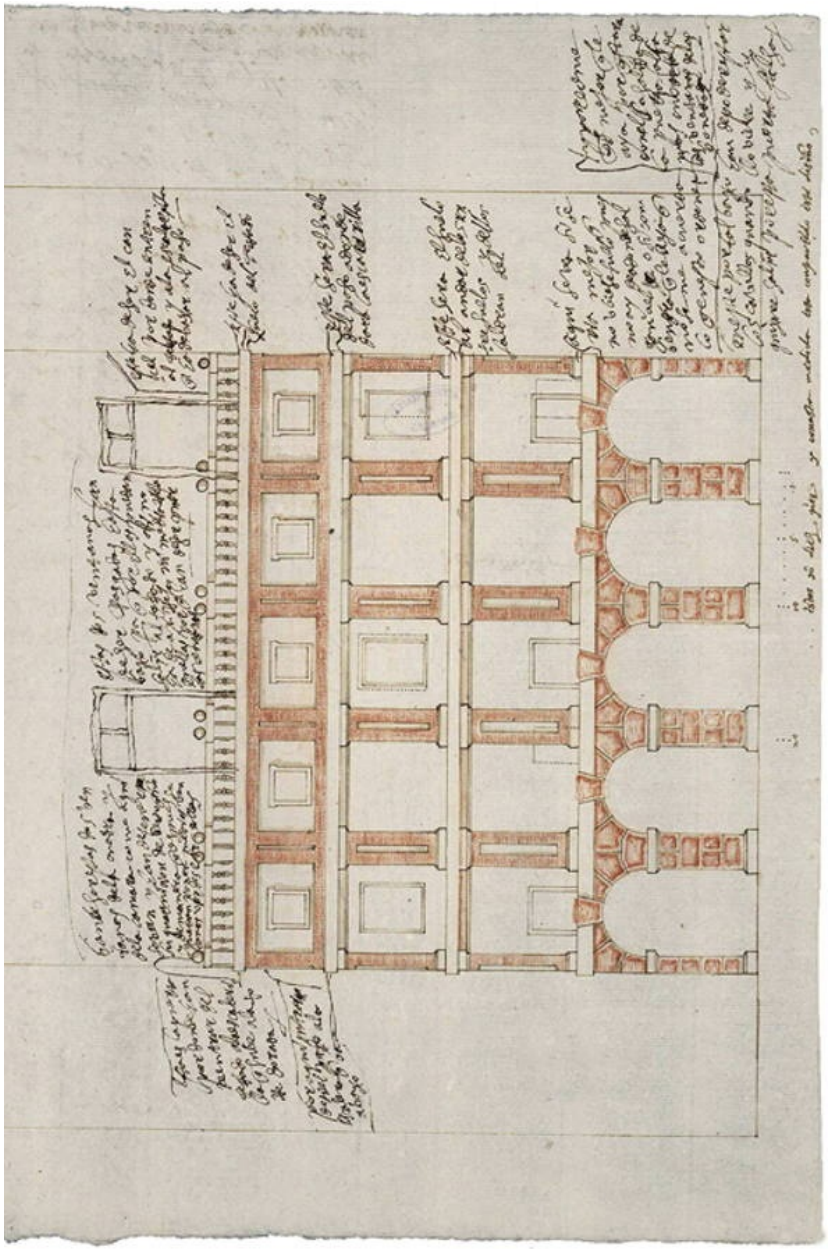


15 y 16. Las dos páginas iniciales de la *Biblia Regia*. La magnífica *Biblia Regia* (o *Políglota de Amberes*), impresa en Amberes bajo la dirección del rey en 1569, comienza proclamando el deseo de Felipe de publicar una versión de las Escrituras que todos los cristianos —protestantes, ortodoxos y católicos— pudieran aceptar como definitiva [página 125] y [página 153].

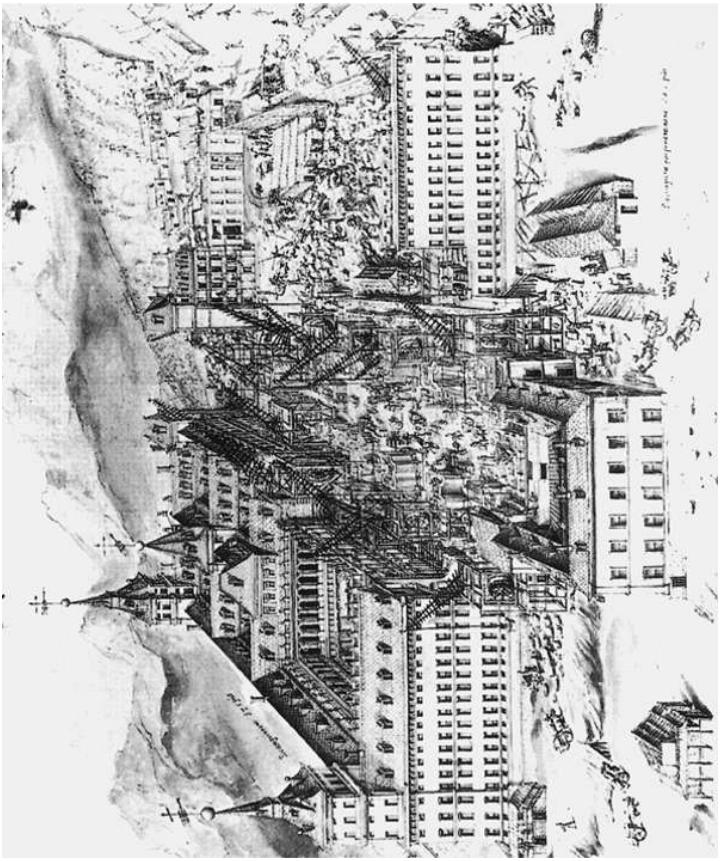
17. *La Vidriera del Rey*, que conmemora la victoria en San Quintín, obra de Wouter Crabeth, 1557-1559. Cuando la iglesia de San Juan, en Gouda, fue reconstruida después de un incendio, los artistas locales crearon una espectacular serie de vidrieras, cada una de entre diez y veinte metros de altura. En el registro central de la Vidriera del Rey, Felipe y María Tudor contemplan la Última Cena. La precisa imagen del rey sugiere que Wouter Crabeth, el vidriero y pintor que supervisó la realización de esta gran obra, pudo haberlo esbozado del natural [página 82] y [página 130].

18. *Cristo concede a Felipe las insignias del poder*, de Hieronymus Wierix, 1585. En este triunfalista grabado neerlandés, Jesús bendice a Felipe, al que entrega el orbe, junto con la espada, una rama de olivo, la corona y la cruz. Los ángeles preparan las palmas y laureles de la victoria, mientras que el papa, ignorado por todos, observa la escena con mirada torva [página 134].

19. Felipe sorprendido con un rosario, de Sofonisba Anguissola, c. 1575. Los rayos X han mostrado que, cuando Sofonisba realizó el original de este retrato real en 1564, el rey tenía la mano en su espada. Una década más tarde, la pintora cambió por completo la obra, sustituyendo la espada por un rosario [página 134].

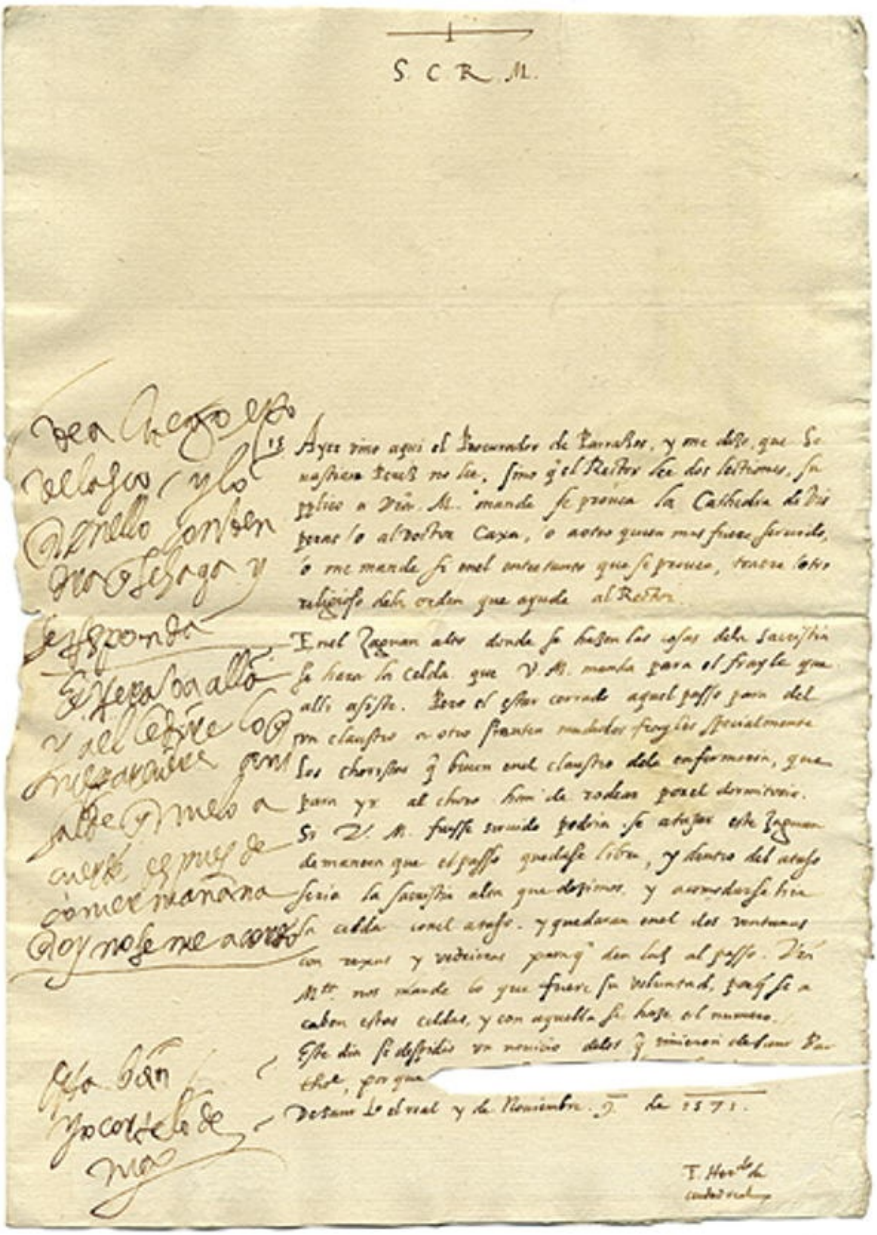


20. Felipe corrige los planos de sus arquitectos, 1561-1562. El rey tenía una idea clara de lo que quería en cualquier campo, incluida la arquitectura —en este caso, una planta adicional en el Alcázar de Madrid —, y no dudaba en expresar sus puntos de vista con palabras y dibujos [página 142].

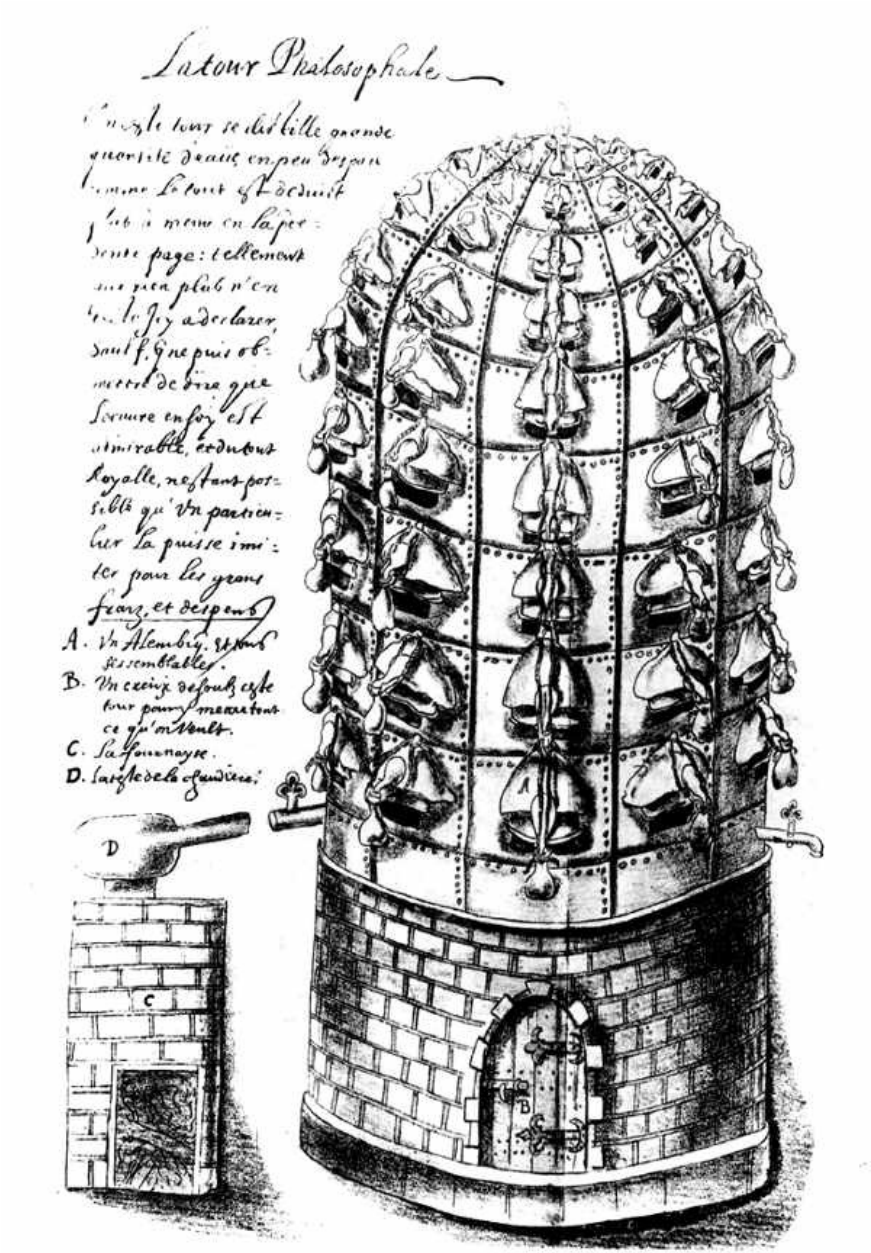


21. *El Escorial en construcción*, de Fabrizio Castello, 1576. Este detallado dibujo del avance de las obras de San Lorenzo de El Escorial muestra el ala sur del monasterio y los apartamentos reales prácticamente acabados, mientras que las grúas ayudan a construir la basílica y la biblioteca. El alojamiento temporal para la mano de obra aparece a la derecha [página 146].

22. Las efigies funerarias de Felipe y su familia en El Escorial, de Pompeo Leoni, 1597-1600. Aunque Felipe murió antes de que Leoni instalara estas enormes estatuas de bronce a la izquierda del altar mayor, tuvo tiempo de aprobar el diseño y, por tanto, la decisión de presentarlo anciano, calvo y cansado (aunque resplandeciente con la armadura que había usado en la guerra cuarenta años antes). Su cuarta esposa, Ana, está arrodillada a su lado, y detrás aparecen sus predecesoras María Manuela e Isabel, así como don Carlos —que mira por encima del hombro del rey—, por fin el hijo leal que Felipe siempre había anhelado [página 147] y [página 256].

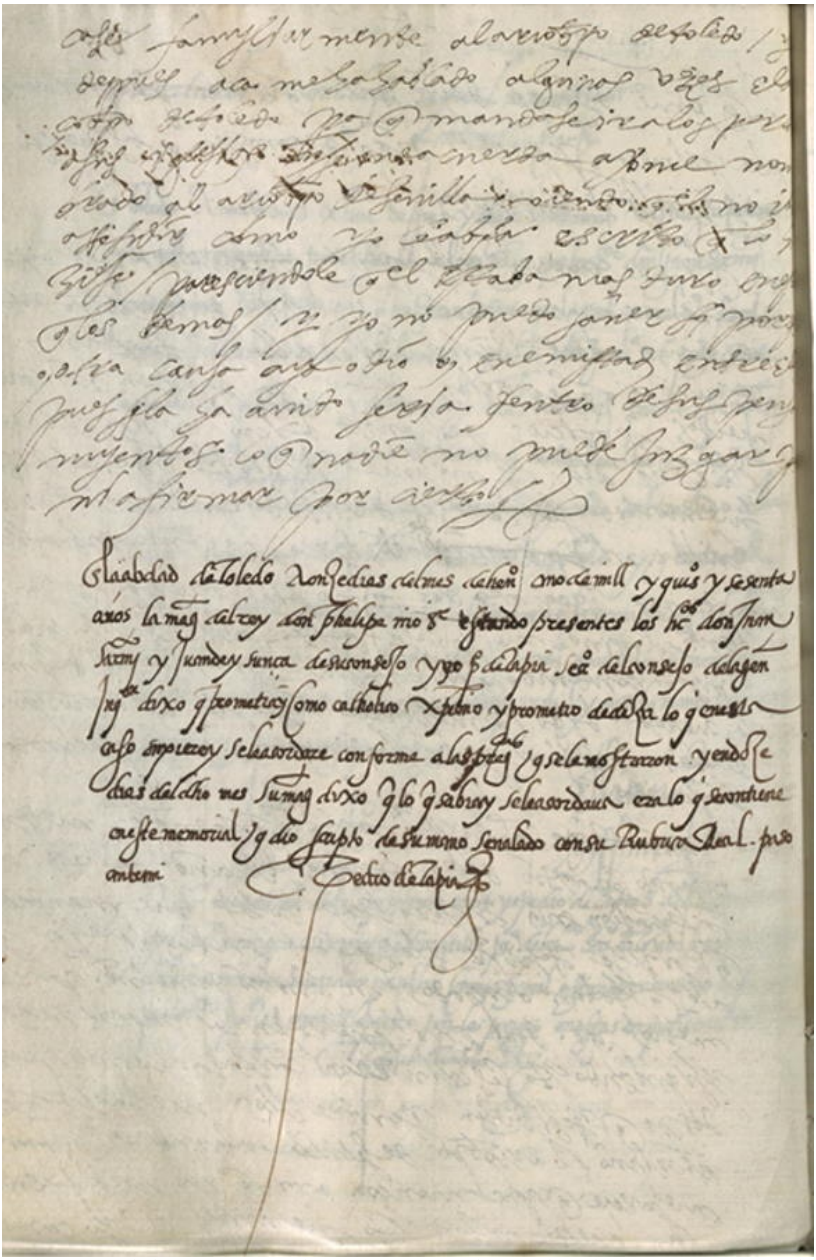


23. Felipe recorta un pasaje ofensivo de un documento sobre El Escorial, 1571. Algo que leyó en él impulsó a Felipe a alcanzar un par de tijeras y eliminar la mitad de una frase en esta carta. Para aclarar lo que acababa de hacer, antes de devolver el documento censurado a su secretario, el rey escribió al margen: «Está bien. Yo corté lo demás» [página 148].

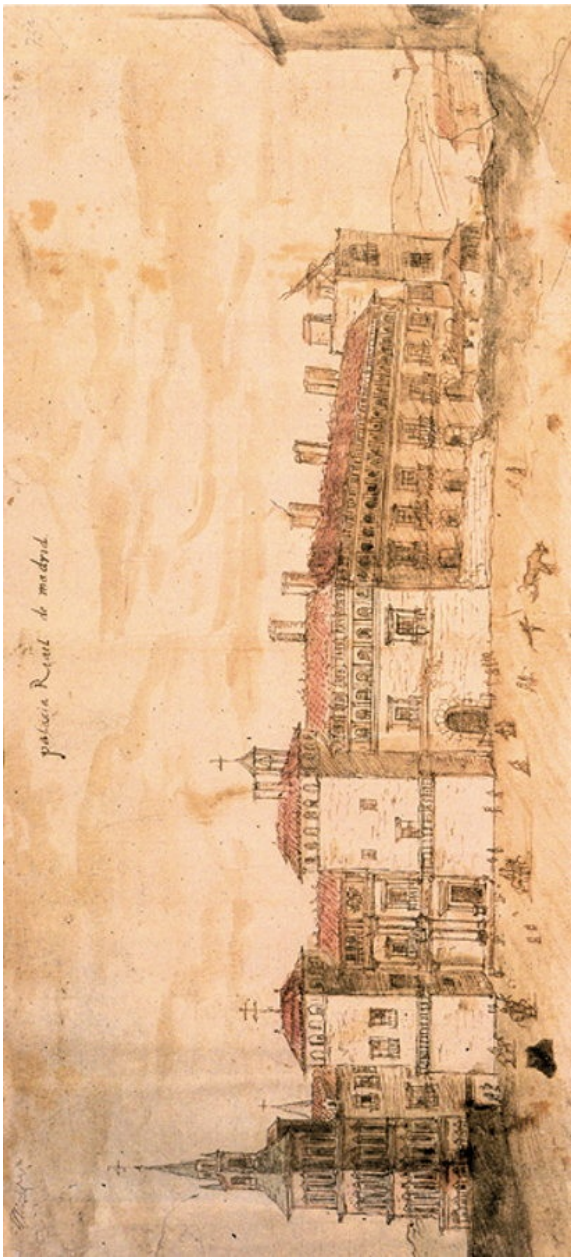


24. «La torre del filósofo» y la destilería en El Escorial, de Jehan Lhermite, c. 1600. A lo largo de su vida, Felipe mostró un gran interés por la alquimia y ocupó un conjunto de once estancias en El Escorial con el equipo de destilación, que incluía una gran torre de hojalata, de unos siete metros de altura, que se situó sobre un horno de ladrillo. Se fijaban numerosos recipientes de vidrio para recoger la esencia de las hierbas (cultivadas en los jardines reales) y materias empleadas, que se obtenía al calentar la torre. Según Jehan Lhermite, la torre destilaba unos diez kilos de «quintaesencia» todos los días, que los expertos utilizaban para producir diversos compuestos químicos [página 152] y [página 524].

25. El Candil, uno de los relojes instalados en el despacho de Felipe, obra de Hans de Evalo, 1583. Según su ayuda de cámara, Jehan Lhermite, Felipe siempre tenía dos relojes en su despacho, cada uno iluminado por un candil de aceite, que «causaba una inusual y profunda impresión» en todos aquellos que visitaban al rey. Los relojes regulaban y medían su vida, dividiéndola en minutos, determinando sus acciones y ocupaciones diarias. Este reloj, construido por el relojero holandés de Felipe, Hans de Evalo, sigue expuesto en los apartamentos reales en El Escorial [página 157].



26. Felipe responde bajo juramento a las cuestiones remitidas por el arzobispo Carranza, 1560. El rey escribió las respuestas a cada una de las preguntas de Carranza respecto a sus relaciones con el inquisidor general Valdés. Después, el 12 de enero de 1560, el secretario del Consejo de la Inquisición, Pedro de Tapia, certificó que el rey había «prometido como católico» contar todo lo que sabía, y que su testimonio fue «escrito de su mano» y autentificado con la «rúbrica real» (la «J» al final de su declaración). Este fue, probablemente, el primer interrogatorio que Felipe sufrió desde que su padre indagara sobre su vida sexual en 1543 [página 181].

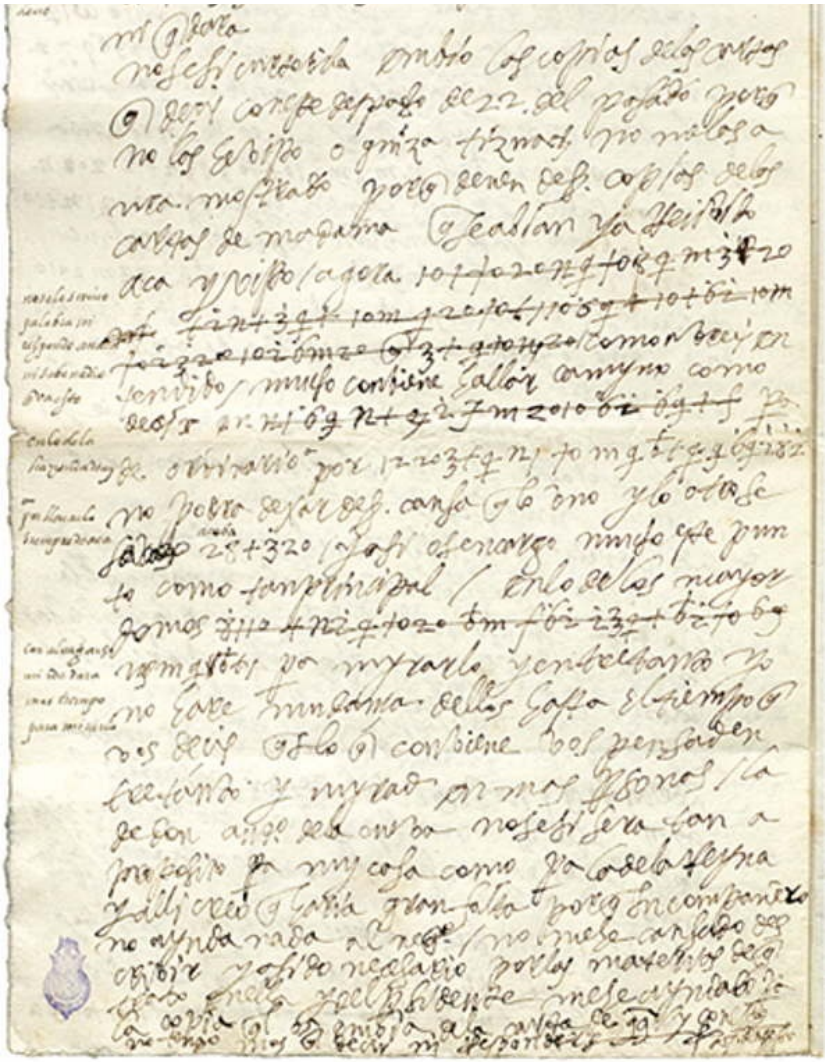


27. Las habitaciones de Felipe con vistas al Alcázar de Madrid, de Anton van den Wyngaerde, c. 1565. Felipe estableció su capital en Madrid en 1561 y comenzó a trabajar casi de inmediato en la ampliación del Alcázar. Las obras empezaron con la construcción de la Torre Dorada (en el extremo izquierdo), con tres plantas de altas ventanas y una cubierta de pizarra, coronada por un chapitel de estilo flamenco. El rey trabajaba y celebraba las audiencias en una serie de aposentos que daban a la Casa de Campo, mientras que sus ministros lo hacían en los despachos inferiores [página 185].

El Rey N.S.º Desde Madrid á 7 de Febº de 1367
Al Gran Duque de su propia Mano

Primº Pliego

Muy poco ha que tengo vra carta de 22. del pasado con el Capel Cornellaveria y otras antes desa fecha de 27. de Junio de las quales he visto con mucho Contentamiento lo que me escriuis en razon de mi Embiar de mano agora desa Jornada como deseays / aunque agora no me hallo con ella por algunas causas que para mi son de mucho peso y consideracion / quando no hubiese no dejare de yr en Persona en el Verano que viene / y no tengo ningun genero de duda que para entonces estaran las cosas en tal estado que yo podre hazer lo que mas conuenga al seruicio de Dios y mio / y asi no tengo que responder a lo que me escriuis en esta parte / Y en lo que toca a la Gente de Armas que me offrece el Duque de Alua / Yo he holgado mucho de entender su buena voluntad hazia mi seruicio / y yo soy siempre muy Cierto de la que me tiene / Y en lo que toca a la Gente que me offrece el Conde de Feria / Yo he holgado de entender lo que me escriuis / y aunque no tengo necesidad de mas Gente de la que tengo / Yo he mandado escriuir al Conde que se venga para mi / porque quando yo vaya en Persona / Yo quiero llevar conmigo todos los mas Caballeros que pudiere / Y en lo que toca a la Gente de Pie / Yo he mandado escriuir a Don Juan de Austria que se venga para mi con la mas Gente que pudiere / Y en lo que toca a la Gente de Pie que se offrece el Duque de Alua / Yo he holgado

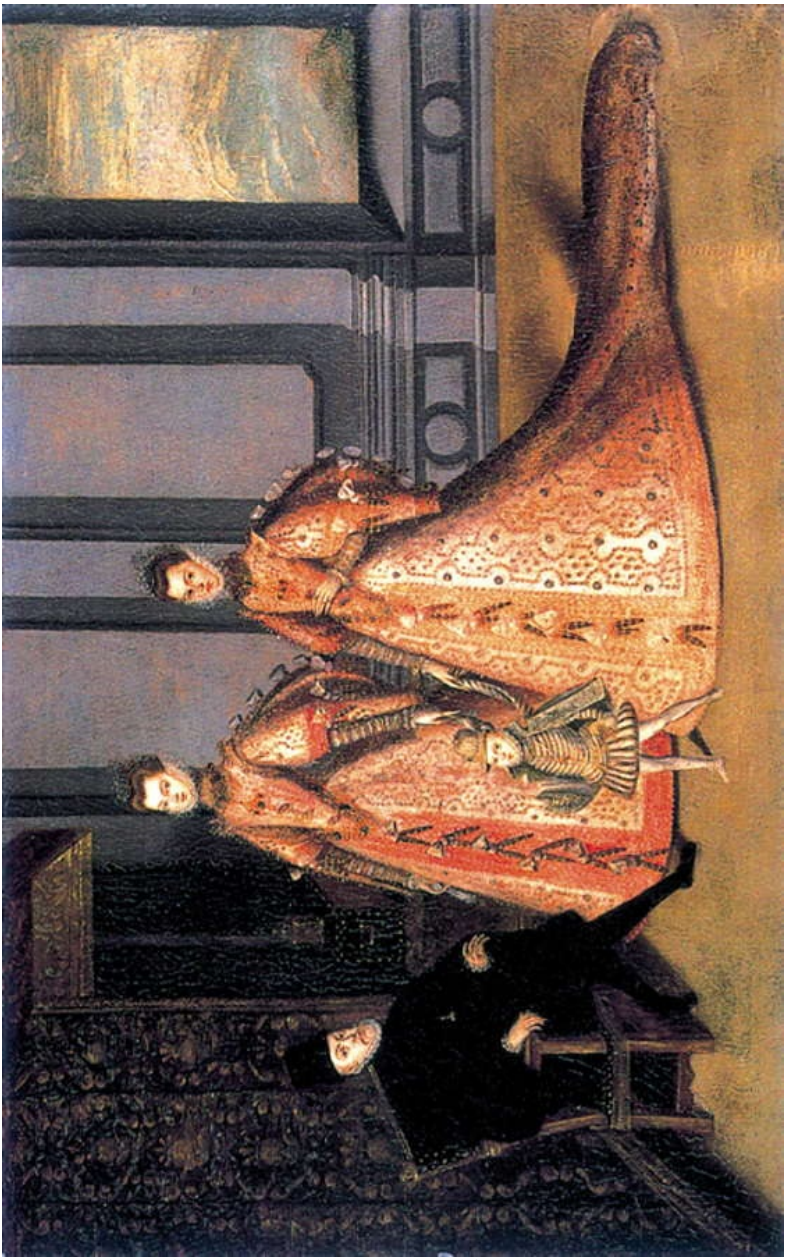


28. Felipe II cifra sus propios documentos, 1567. Esta carta ológrafa del rey al duque de Alba, datada el 7 de agosto de 1567, comienza con el estilo habitual de otros escritos semejantes: prolijo, disperso y desordenado. Cuando Felipe empezó a codificar sus pensamientos, pronto reveló su falta de familiaridad con las reglas elementales de la criptografía: solo cifraba las palabras cruciales en lugar de pasajes enteros, y empleó un símbolo para cada carácter de cada palabra en lugar de utilizar símbolos adicionales para representar las combinaciones frecuentes [página 205].

29. *Isabel de Francia, reina de España*, de Sofonisba Anguissola, 1565. La reina, de veinte años de edad, posó para este retrato justo antes de salir de España para encontrarse con su madre en Bayona. Tal vez para enfatizar su papel como representante del rey, sostiene en su mano derecha una miniatura de Felipe, probablemente basada en el retrato, con la armadura de San Quintín, pintado por Antonio Moro [página 213].

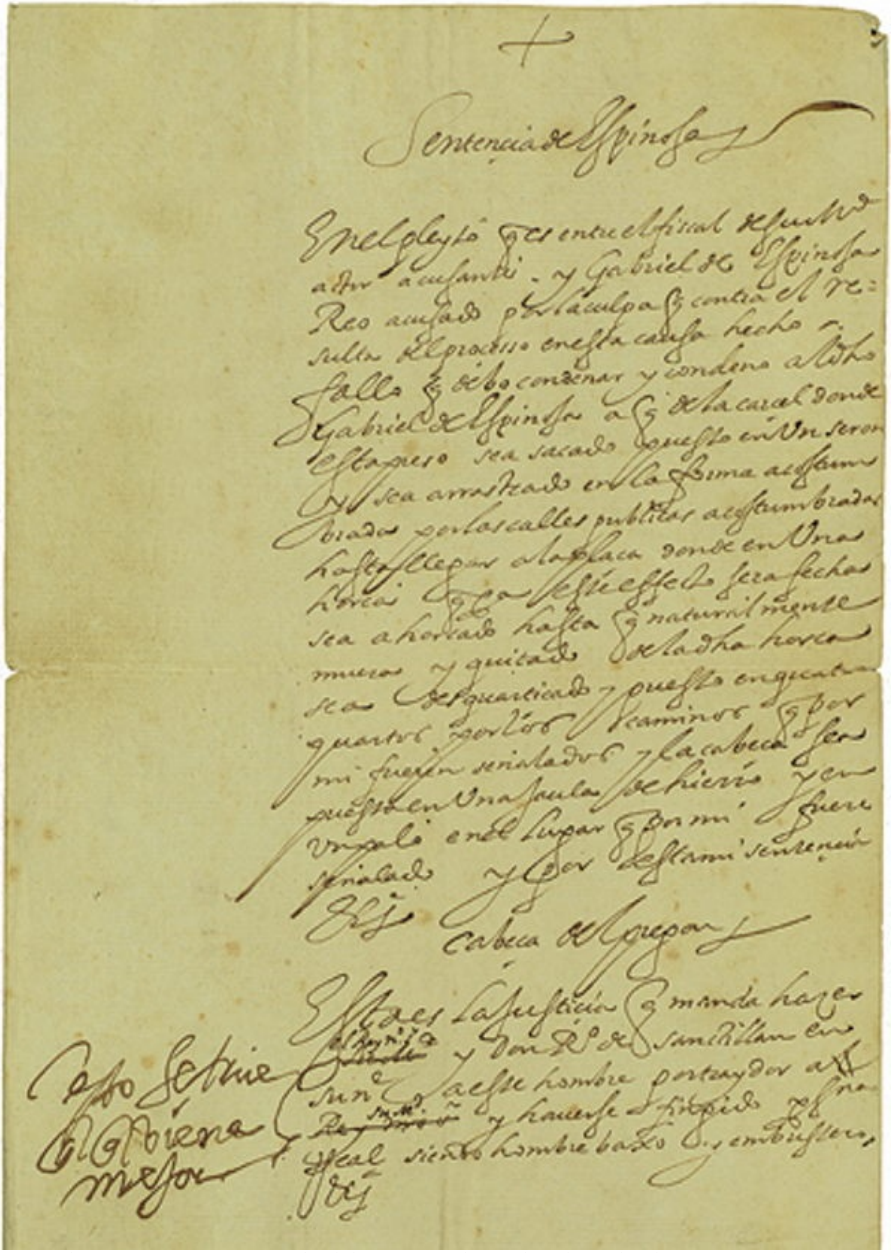
30. *Bautizo del príncipe Fernando el 16 de diciembre de 1571*, pintura anónima. Una procesión de cortesanos y embajadores escolta al príncipe Fernando desde el Alcázar de Madrid hasta la iglesia de San Gil para ser bautizado por el cardenal Espinosa (vestido de rojo, arriba a la izquierda). Esta obra fue encargada por el embajador imperial Hans Khevenhüller (18), de pie justo detrás del infante. Puede verse también a otros destacados miembros de la corte de Felipe, entre ellos al embajador francés Fourquevaux (19), el embajador portugués Pereira (20), el marqués de Ladrada (23), la princesa Juana (24) y el archiduque Wenceslao (25) [página 224].

31. *Felipe II ofreciendo al cielo al infante don Fernando*, también llamado *Ofrenda de Felipe II*, de Tiziano, 1572-1573. Por orden del rey, Alonso Sánchez Coello envió un retrato de Felipe para que Tiziano lo utilizase como modelo y, quizá, también un boceto para sugerir la yuxtaposición del nacimiento del príncipe Fernando (a quien un ángel bastante torpe ofrece una rama de olivo y le promete «grandes hechos te esperan») y la derrota de la flota otomana en Lepanto (vista desde la ventana, y simbolizada por el prisionero turco en primer plano) [página 134] y [página 224].

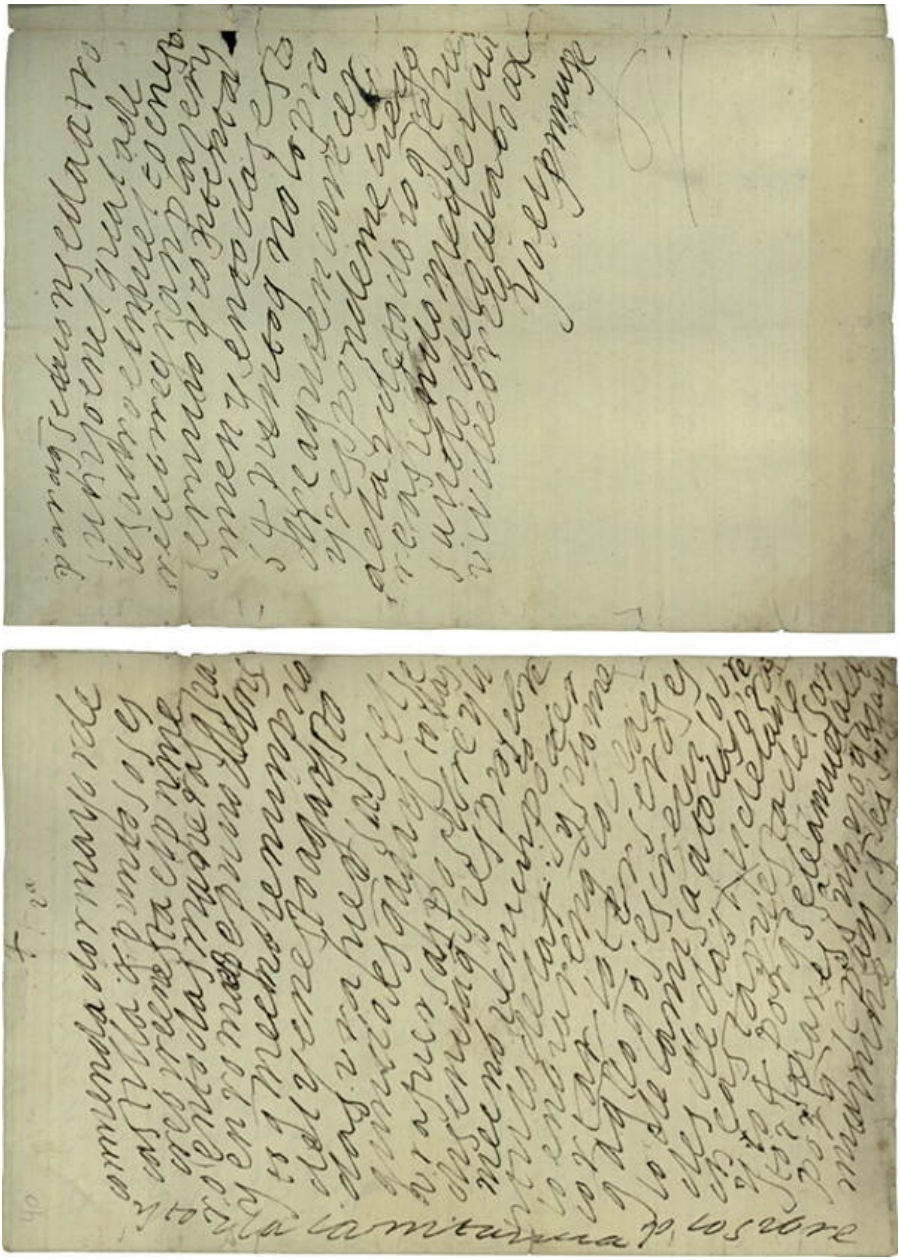


32. *Felipe II, sus hijas Isabel y Catalina, y el príncipe Felipe* (el futuro Felipe III), pintura anónima, 1583-1584. Este retrato íntimo (aunque algo desequilibrado) de Felipe y su familia sobreviviente se hizo después de que el príncipe heredero fuese nombrado caballero del Toisón de Oro (cuya insignia lleva) en 1583 y antes de que Catalina abandonara el círculo familiar para siempre con su marido, el duque de Saboya, en 1585 [página 228].

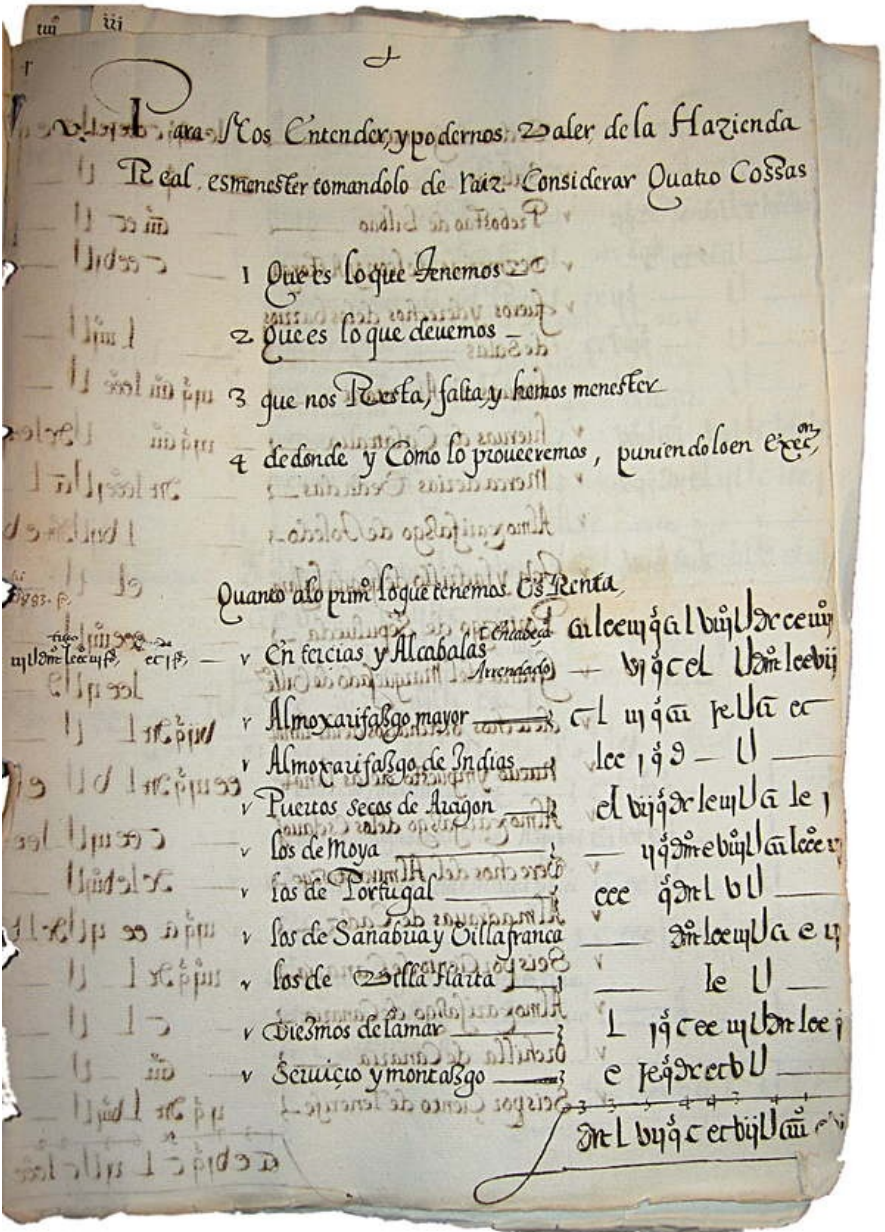
33. *Sor Margarita de la Cruz,* de Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1585. Tras rechazar la oferta de matrimonio con Felipe, su sobrina Margarita entró en el convento de las Descalzas Reales en 1585; allí pasó los restantes cuarenta y ochos años de su vida como monja franciscana cerca de su madre, la emperatriz María, que vivió en el aposento real hasta su muerte en 1603 [página 232].



34. Felipe sentencia a muerte a Gabriel de Espinosa, el «pastelero de Madrigal», que pretendía ser el rey Sebastián de Portugal, 1595. Cuando Felipe leyó por primera vez la pena de muerte, ordenó a un secretario que intercambiara «Su magestad» y «el Rey nuestro señor», pero antes, de su puño y letra, escribió en el margen: «Esto se trueque: que viene mejor», un ejemplo más de las «menudencias» que consumían buena parte del tiempo y las energías del rey [página 235].



35. Don Carlos ordena al embajador español en Roma que compre parte del Santo Prepucio, 1567. Incluso a los veintidós años de edad, la escritura de don Carlos era casi ilegible (lo que podría reflejar simplemente las consecuencias de forzar a alguien zurdo a escribir con la mano derecha) y estaba plagada de faltas ortográficas, una característica preocupante en el heredero de un imperio mundial [página 257].



Para Nos Entender y podernos ayudar de la Hazienda
Real es menester tomandolo de raiz Considerar Quatro Cossas

1 Que es lo que tenemos
2 Que es lo que deuemos
3 que nos Resta, falta y hemos menester
4 de donde y Como lo prouueremos, poniendo loen exec

Quanto alo primº lo que tenemos Es Renta

v En tercias y Alcabalas
v Almoxarifazgo mayor
v Almoxarifazgo de Indias
v Puertos secos de Aragon
v los de Moya
v los de Portugal
v los de Sanabua y Villafranca
v los de Villa Flarta
v Diesmos de la mar
v Seruicio y montazgo

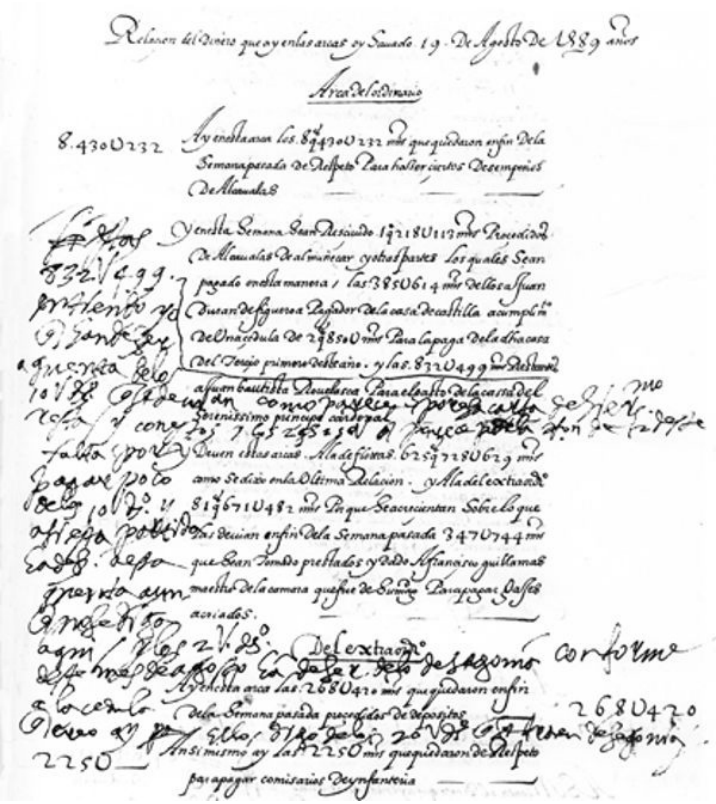
36. «Finanzas para niños»: un intento de explicarle los problemas fiscales a Felipe, 1574. Una página de la «Relación de Hacienda» enviada por Juan de Ovando a Felipe en abril de 1574, en la que, con letra grande y palabras muy simples, explicaba la crisis financiera a un rey que no entendía, o no quería entender, el problema [página 295].

37. *Felipe en su coronación como rey de Portugal*, de Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1581. A pesar de que regía un imperio global, Felipe solo participó en una ceremonia de coronación: en Tomar, como rey de Portugal, en 1581. Según el relato de un cortesano, «vestido de brocado, con su cetro en la mano», parecía «el rey David» [página 360] y [página 390].

38. *La batalla de la Tercera*, de Niccolò Granello y Fabrizio Castello. Los frescos encargados para la Sala de Batallas, en El Escorial, incluyen una vista de los prisioneros capturados por la flota española en la batalla de la isla de São Miguel en 1582, atados espalda con espalda mientras sus captores se disponen a ejecutarlos por ahogamiento. También representan los daños infligidos a la Armada victoriosa, incluido su buque insignia (tanto en esta batalla como en la campaña de 1588): el San Martín [página 366].

39. El emblema de la monarquía de Felipe tras la unión de las coronas: «El mundo no basta». Esta medalla de bronce sobredorado, fundida probablemente en 1583, celebra la exitosa anexión de Portugal con una frase sobre Alejandro Magno acuñada por el poeta romano Juvenal —NON SUFFICIT ORBIS — y sitúa a Bucéfalo, el caballo que solo Alejandro podía montar, en la cima del mundo. La «nube» que divide la palabra SUFFICIT representa a Dios y recuerda a todos que incluso los conquistadores del mundo tienen limitaciones [página 367].

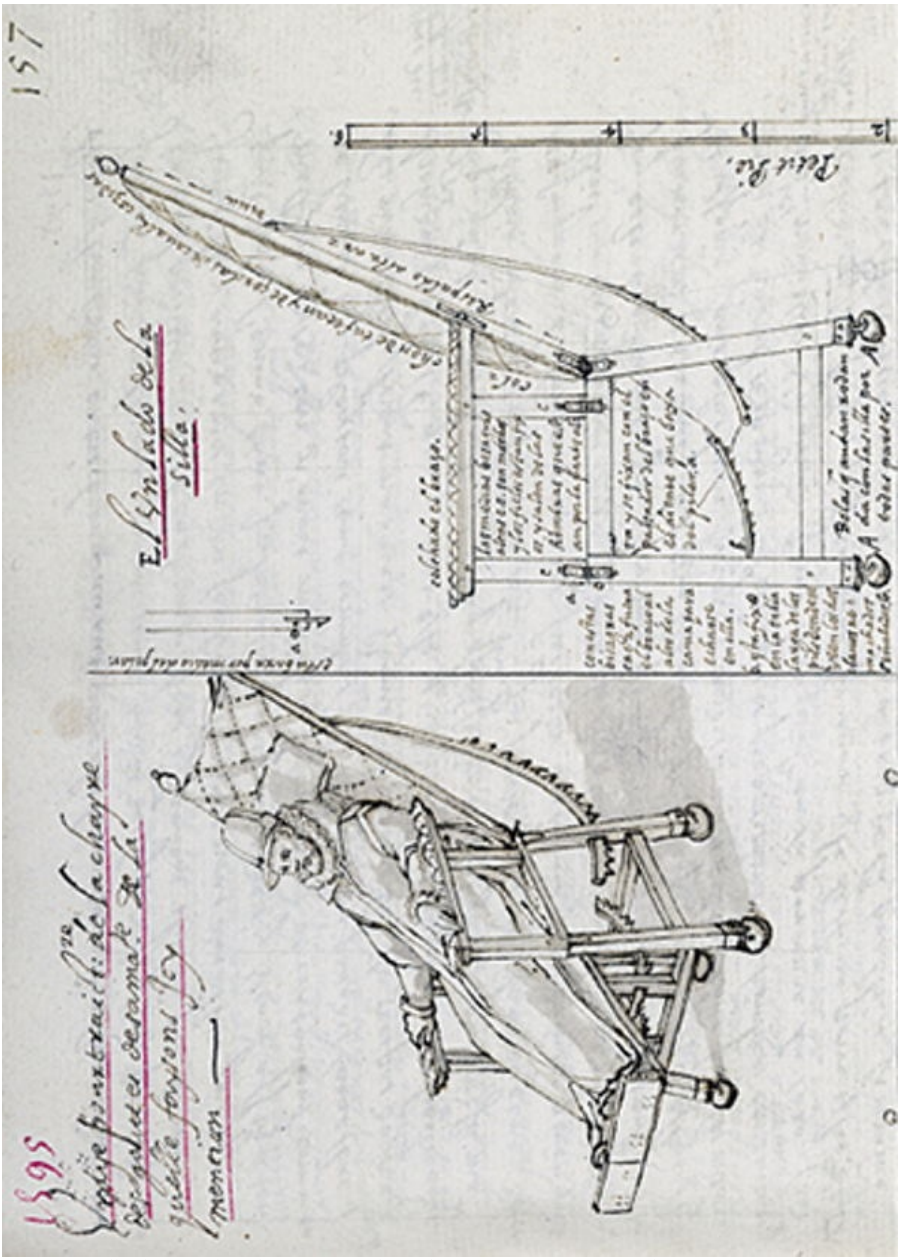
40. *Felipe II*, de Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1587. Los retratos oficiales del rey en sus últimos años suelen representarlo vestido de negro, transmitiendo su majestad no a través de los símbolos externos de la realeza, sino mediante la dignidad y la serenidad. Su único adorno aquí es la insignia de la orden del Toisón de Oro. Sánchez Coello realizó este discreto retrato de su amo, entonces con sesenta años de edad, para entregárselo al papa Sixto V, pero el gran duque Fernando de Toscana abrió el paquete y se negó a desprenderse de su contenido [página 391].



41. El estado de cuentas semanal: Felipe intenta equilibrar sus finanzas diarias, 1589. El coste de la Armada creó tales tensiones en la tesorería real que Felipe exigió que se le entregara un estado de cuentas cada sábado, indicando la cantidad de dinero disponible y los pagos que debían ser satisfechos. Todas las cantidades se daban en maravedíes, una unidad de cuenta que hace que los totales parezcan mayores —un ducado tenía cuatrocientos maravedíes—; al final de la semana, el rey solía tener en torno a veinte mil ducados a su disposición, menos de lo que costaba sostener la Armada cada día. No es de extrañar, por tanto, que luchara por encontrar la manera de retrasar algunos pagos [página 415].

42. «La Jornada de Tarazona», en Jehan Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*. En 1592, el rey, sus hijos y sus cortesanos dejaron El Escorial y se dirigieron, pasando por Segovia, Medina del Campo, Tordesillas y Simancas, a Valladolid. Desde allí, la comitiva real viajó después por Navarra y Aragón, donde el príncipe Felipe fue reconocido como sucesor y heredero, antes de regresar a Madrid. Lhermite mostró la ruta exacta que siguieron, unos ochocientos kilómetros en total, y proporcionó así una de las primeras «guías de viaje» españolas [página 446] y [página 524].

43. *Felipe II*, de Alonso Sánchez Coello, 1588. Aunque fue atribuido a Pantoja de la Cruz, la historiadora del arte María Kusche argumentó convincentemente que Sánchez Coello pintó este retrato hacia 1588, cuando el rey tenía sesenta y un años de edad [página 449]. Compárese su semblante agotado con el de Carlos V a los cincuenta y cinco años [véase lámina 8, página 78].



44. «La silla de gota de Felipe II», en Jehan Lhermite, *Le Passetemps*. Felipe vivió más tiempo que cualquier otro miembro de su dinastía, pero después de 1595 la artritis le obligó a usar prendas holgadas para aliviar la presión sobre sus articulaciones y a pasar sus días en una ingeniosa silla con distintos ajustes que le permitían estar postrado y dormitar sin tener que ponerse en pie. Desde este artilugio —en el que también era trasladado entre sus diversos palacios— Felipe siguió gobernando su imperio en todo el mundo hasta su último viaje a El Escorial en 1598 [página 449].

45. *La visión de fray Julián de Alcalá*, de Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, c. 1645. El fraile franciscano y cinco testigos de la localidad de Paracuellos de Jarama observan cómo el alma de Felipe asciende del purgatorio al paraíso en septiembre de 1603. La pintura de Murillo —perteneciente a una serie realizada entre 1645 y 1648 para el claustro de San Francisco de Sevilla— sigue meticulosamente la descripción de la visión publicada por fray Antonio Daza en 1611 [página 475].

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Notas

[1] Rodríguez-Salgado, «Felipe II en su aniversario», p. 9. <<

[2] Gil, «John Elliott: ¿el último hispanista?», p. 345. <<

[3] IVdeDJ 61/306, 339 y 360, y BL *Addl.* 28,350/315-26; todos los billetes s. f. intercambiados entre Felipe y Hoyo sobre el zahorí fueron escritos durante el invierno de 1562-1563. Sobre «las necesarias», véase García Tapia, «El Escorial», pp. 420-421 (más ejemplos en el capítulo 6). <<

[4] Gardiner, «Prescott's most indispensable aide», p. 99, Gayangos a W. H. Prescott en 1843; Prescott, *History*, I, p. IV; Riba, p. 36, carta a Vázquez, 30 de mayo de 1576; ASVe *SDS* 20/68, Lippomano al dogo de Venecia, 14 de abril de 1587. <<

[5] Ball y Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, p. 30, Carlos a Felipe, Palamós, 6 de mayo de 1543, ológrafo. Para ejemplos de decisiones que han dejado poco o ningún rastro documental, véanse los capítulos 4 y 16. <<

[6] AGS *Estado* 153/68, 72 y 77, Velasco a Gabriel de Zayas, 27 de julio y 1 y 9 de agosto de 1571; BL, *Add.* 28,336/76, Velasco al cardenal Espinosa, 9 de agosto de 1571. <<

[7] Voltaire, *Essai*, II, pp. 431-432 (publicado en 1756); Watson, *History*, II, p. 408 (publicado en 1777). <<

[8] Bouza Álvarez, «Felipe II sube», p. 301, n.º 2, de un cartapacio de 1574 titulado «El pan quotidiano». <<

[9] Cohen, *Supreme Command*, p. 113. <<

[10] Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 340 (que cita a Fernand Braudel, *El Mediterráneo*, II, p. 795). <<

[11] AGS *Estado K* 1490/44, Felipe a Manuel Filiberto de Saboya, 22 de julio de 1557; AGS *Estado* 146/147, Gonzalo Pérez a Felipe y respuesta, 4 y [10] de abril de 1565; IVdeDJ 44/127, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez y respuesta, 16 de abril de

1575; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 85, Felipe a sus hijas, 1583. <<

[12] AHN, *Consejos* 4416/101, Herrera a don Luis de Salazar, 15 de diciembre de 1599. <<

[13] Vilar Sánchez, *1526*, pp. 42-43, citando a un enviado portugués que había acompañado a la novia a Sevilla. <<

[14] Brewer *et al., Letters and papers*, IV.2, 1127, Dr. Edward Lee a Enrique VIII, 30 de septiembre de 1526. <<

[15] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, «El príncipe», p. 886; Zúñiga, *Crónica burlesca*, p. 141 («El enperador y Felipito su hijo están buenos»). <<

[16] Rodríguez Villa, *El Emperador*, pp. 359 y 363, Salinas a Fernando, 28 de mayo y 19 de agosto de 1527. <<

[17] March, *Niñez*, I, pp. 122-123, Leonora de Castro a Carlos, 15 de noviembre de 1530; y p. 46, Pedro González de Mendoza a Carlos V, primavera de 1531. <<

[18] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 47-48, González de Mendoza a Carlos, 15 y 30 de abril y 20 de mayo de 1531. <<

[19] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, p. 182, cita de Francisco de Encinas. <<

[20] Rodríguez Villa, *El Emperador*, pp. 499-500, Salinas a Fernando, 14 de septiembre de 1530. <<

[21] Alonso Acero y Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, «Alá», p. 119. <<

[22] Fernández de Oviedo, *Libro de la Cámara Real del Prinçipe Don Juan*, pp. 1-3. <<

[23] March, *Niñez*, I, p. 230, Zúñiga a Carlos, Madrid, 11 de febrero de 1536. <<

[24] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, p. 77, citando a Francisco de Monzón, *Libro primero del espejo del prinçipe christiano* (Lisboa, 1544). <<

[25] March, *Niñez*, I, pp. 68-70 y 72, Silíceo a Carlos, 26 de noviembre de 1535, 25 de febrero de 1536 y 19 de marzo de

1540. <<

[26] *Ibid.*, I, p. 230 y 227, Zúñiga a Carlos, 9 de febrero de 1536 y 25 de agosto de 1535, y p. 73, Silíceo a Carlos, 27 de junio de 1540. <<

[27] AGS, *CSR* 36, fol. 7. «Memoria de las cosas de oro y plata»; y Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Aprendizaje*, pp. 101-102; March, *Niñez*, II, p. 344, doña Estefanía de Requesens a su madre, 28 de octubre de 1537. <<

[28] March, *Niñez*, II, p. 345, doña Estefanía a su madre, 23 de marzo de 1538. <<

[29] BL *Addl.* 28,354/51-53, 113, 176, marqués de Ladrada, a Felipe II y rescriptos, 25 de octubre y 23 de diciembre de 1570, 5 de abril de 1571; AHN *Inq*, Libro 101/695-697, licenciado Hernando Arenillas de Reynoso, fiscal de la Suprema, a Felipe, 4 de diciembre de 1594, con rescripto. <<

[30] Fernández Álvarez, *La España del Emperador*, pp. 536-537, citando las *Actas de las Cortes*. <<

[31] Gachard, «Charles-Quint», 625 n.º 1, María a Carlos, 9 de junio de 1538. <<

[32] *CDCV*, II, pp. 32-43, instrucciones fechadas el 5 de noviembre de 1539. Todas las citas siguientes vienen de esta edición. <<

[33] March, *Niñez*, I, p. 249, Zúñiga a Carlos, 25 de junio de 1541. <<

[34] *Ibid.*, I, 237, 241,247, 259 y 261, Zúñiga a Carlos, 25 de febrero y 19 de mayo de 1540, 10 de septiembre de 1543 y 4 de febrero de 1544; AGS *CSR* 36 fol. 8, pagos del 23 de diciembre de 1540. <<

[35] March, *Niñez*, I, 248-249, Zúñiga a Carlos, 25 de junio de 1541. <<

[36] Morel-Fatio, «La vie», p. 280; March, *Niñez*, I, p. 292,

Carlos a Zúñiga, 11 de noviembre de 1540. <<

[37] AGS *CSR* 106/470-471, albalá a «el bachiller Christóbal de Estrella», 4 de febrero de 1541. <<

[38] AGS, *CSR* 36, fol. 8/237v registra la compra. <<

[39] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II: la educación*, p. 605, citando un informe de Francisco de Vargas Mexía, preceptor del príncipe. <<

[40] March, *Niñez*, I, 248-9, Zúñiga a Carlos, 25 de junio de 1541; Ball y Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, pp. 65-66, Carlos a Felipe, 4 de mayo de 1543; AGS *Estado* 393/36, Zayas a Felipe II y rescripto, 17 de abril de 1576. <<

[41] AGS *CSR* 36 fol. 8, entrada correspondiente al 23 de julio de 1540 («libro de ojas»); AGS *CSR* 36 fol. 1, «Memorias de las carretas». <<

[42] March, *Niñez*, I, pp. 247, 249 y 251, Zúñiga a Carlos, 24 de marzo, 25 de agosto y 9 de octubre de 1541. <<

[43] *Ibid*., II, pp. 285 y 335, doña Estefanía de Requesens a su madre, Madrid, 9 de septiembre de 1535. <<

[44] BL, *Cotton Ms Vespasian* CVII-171-174, «Poder para Castilla» de Carlos V, 1 de mayo de 1543, copia. Carlos utiliza el plural «reyes» porque, técnicamente, compartía la soberanía con su madre, doña Juana, «reina propietaria» de Castilla desde 1504. <<

[45] *CDCV*, II, 86-87, Instrucción de Carlos a Felipe, y AGS PR 26/83, «La restricción del poder del príncipe», ambas fechadas en Barcelona, el 1 de mayo de 1543. <<

[46] Véase Ball y Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, pp. 38-83, Carlos a Felipe, Palamós, 4 de mayo de 1543, ológrafo, para todas las citas tomadas de este documento. <<

[47] *CDCV*, II, p. 179, «Bodas de Felipe»; Bouza Álvarez, *Locos*, p. 196, citando al cronista Alonso de Santa Cruz; March,

Niñez, I, pp. 262-263, Zúñiga a Carlos, 4 de febrero de 1544; y Bouza Álvarez, *Locos*, pp. 78-9, don Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, embajador español en Portugal, a Carlos, 21 de noviembre de 1544. <<

[48] Ball y Parker, *Cómo ser rey*, pp. 86-133, Carlos a Felipe, 6 de mayo de 1543, ológrafo, para todas las citas tomadas de este documento. <<

[49] Fernández Álvarez, «Las instrucciones políticas», p. 175, Francisco de Eraso a Felipe, y respuesta, 20 de febrero de 1559; DH, I, 319-322, testimonio bajo juramento de Felipe, 11 de enero de 1560; BZ 144/39, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe, y respuesta, 28 de diciembre de 1574. <<

[50] March, *Niñez*, I, p. 255, Zúñiga a Carlos, 8 de junio de 1543; Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, p. 675, Tavera a Carlos, 8 de junio de 1543; March, *Niñez*, I, p. 304, Carlos a Zúñiga, 1 de mayo de 1543; *CDCV*, II, p. 157, Cobos a Carlos, 7 de agosto de 1543. Carlos expresa su aprobación el 27 de octubre de 1543: Martínez Millán, *La corte*, II, p. 102. <<

[51] *CDCV*, II, pp. 172-173 y 183, Carlos a Felipe, 27 de octubre y 15 de noviembre de 1543. <<

[52] *Ibid*., II, pp. 189-193, Felipe a Carlos, 4 de febrero 1544, borrador. <<

[53] BNE Ms 10.300/116-33, Los Cobos a Carlos, copia con fecha equivocada (pero julio de 1544). <<

[54] Chabod, «¿Milán o los Países Bajos?», p. 336, Felipe a Carlos, 14 de diciembre de 1544. <<

[55] *CDCV*, II, pp. 300-301, Felipe a Carlos, 14 de diciembre de 1544 (fechada erróneamente el 24 del mismo mes). <<

[56] March, *Niñez*, I, pp. 74-75, Silíceo a Carlos, 6 de agosto de 1543. <<

[57] AGS, CSR 36 fol. 1/28v-29, varias cédulas de julio de 1544,

Édouard, *L'empire*, pp. 29-32, y Frieder, *Chivalry*, pp. 42-48, sobre la debacle vallisoletana; AGS, CSR 36 fol. 1/85-86, cédulas del 18 de julio y 7 de agosto de 1546 para proporcionar «vino blanco para labarse Su Alteza las piernas» y un bastón, después de «un combate»; Fallows, *Jousting*, 392, citando a Luis Zapata de Chaves, *Miscellanea*. <<

[58] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *La «Librería Rica»*, pp. 74-75, registra la compra de velas para leer, después de 1543. <<

[59] *Ibid*., pp. 554-555 (las obras prohibidas de Maquiavelo) y pp. 668-669. <<

[60] March, *Niñez*, I, pp. 321-322, Carlos a Zúñiga, Gante, 24 de diciembre de 1544. <<

[61] *Ibid*., I, pp. 323-326, Carlos a Zúñiga, Bruselas, 17 de febrero de 1545. <<

[62] Como José Luis Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero sugiere acertadamente en su magnífico libro *El aprendizaje cortesano de Felipe II (1527-1546): la formación de un príncipe del Renacimiento*, Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, Madrid, 1999. <<

[63] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II: la mirada*, cap. 7, sobre la «rebeldía juvenil». <<

[64] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, p. 1270; BR Ms II-587/43, *Tratado del príncipe instruido*, compuesto hacia 1615. Véase también la reconstrucción imaginaria, pero acertada, de Domínguez, *Una diosa*. <<

[65] *CDCV*, II, p. 408, Felipe a Carlos, Valladolid, 13 de agosto de 1545. <<

[66] Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *El aprendizaje*, p. 166, publica un extracto de la «carta de emancipación», entregada en una ceremonia privada de investidura el 16 de septiembre de 1546. <<

[67] Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 29, Felipe a Carlos, 20 de diciembre de 1546. <<

[68] Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, p. 607 (*Relación* de Álvarez). <<

[69] Todas las citas pertenecen a *CDCV*, II, pp. 569-601, Carlos a Felipe, enero de 1548. <<

[70] *CDCV*, II, pp. 612-615, Carlos a Felipe, Augsburgo, 9 de abril de 1548. <<

[71] Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 387, citando a Antonio Pérez y García de Loaysa. <<

[72] Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, p. 45; AGS, *CSR* 33/7, s. fol., «Sumarios de la despensa y gasto», 1548-1551, documentos de la «Boticaria» de noviembre de 1548; Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, p. 703, Raimundo de Tassis y Gonzalo Pérez a Granvela, 4 y 11 de noviembre de 1548. <<

[73] Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariño, «Ver y conocer», p. 55, Ludovico Strozzi al duque de Mantua, Génova, 1 de diciembre de 1548. <<

[74] *Ibid*., pp. 72 y 77, Strozzi al duque de Mantua, Génova, 1 y 9 de diciembre de 1548; Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, pp. 610 y 619 (*Relación* de Vicente Álvarez). <<

[75] Morel-Fatio, «La vie», p. 285. <<

[76] Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, p. 424 (Amberes). <<

[77] *Ibid*., p. 471. Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, «El erasmismo», pp. 691-693, recoge la orden de sustituir la estatua, lo que convirtió a Felipe en el único gobernante europeo en erigir un monumento de este tipo a Erasmo. <<

[78] Lanz, *Correspondenz*, III, p. 17, Carlos a María de Hungría, 16 de diciembre de 1550. <<

[79] IVdeDJ 55/IX/97-98, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 17 de junio de 1586. <<

[80] HHStA *Spanien: Hofkorrespondenz*, Karton 1, mappe 4/23 y 27, Felipe a Maximiliano, Toro, 16 y 25 de septiembre de 1551. <<

[81] *CDCV*, III, pp. 359-369, 377-390 y 617, Felipe a Carlos, Toro, 27 de septiembre de 1551, Madrid, 24 de noviembre de 1551 y Valladolid, 2 de septiembre de 1553; Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II y su tiempo*, p. 761, el conde de Buendía a Felipe, 2 de septiembre de 1552. <<

[82] *CDCV*, III, p. 420, Carlos a Felipe, Innsbruck, 9 de abril de 1552. <<

[83] *Ibid.*, pp. 423-435, Felipe a Carlos, s. f. (pero contestando a la carta de Carlos del 4 de mayo de 1552); *ibid.*, IV, p. 100 n., Felipe a Andrea Doria, 12 de junio de 1552. <<

[84] RAH *Salazar y Castro, Ms* A-51/107v-8, Felipe a don Luis de Ávila, Monzón, 6 de octubre de 1552. <<

[85] AGS *Estado* 98/274-275, Memorial de Francisco Duarte, enviado a Felipe en septiembre de 1553 aunque elaborado antes de junio, mes en que Duarte abandonó los Países Bajos. <<

[86] *CDCV*, III, pp. 579-580, Carlos a Felipe, 2 de abril de 1553. <<

[87] AGS *Estado* 1498/6, documento sin título ni fecha que comienza diciendo: «Al tiempo que falesció el Rey Eduardo»; AGS *Estado* 807/29**,** Carlos a Felipe, 30 de julio de 1553. <<

[88] AGS *Estado* 807/24, Felipe a Carlos, 22 de agosto de 1553, ológrafa en respuesta a las cartas del emperador fechadas el 30 de julio de 1553. <<

[89] *CDCV*, III, pp. 636-639, Carlos a Felipe, 16 de diciembre de 1553 (pero no enviado hasta 26 de diciembre); y *CODOIN*, III, pp. 451-453, Carlos a Felipe, 21 de enero de 1554. <<

[90] Adams y Stephens, *Select Documents*, n.º 264, «Acta para el Matrimonio de la Reina María», mayo de 1554. <<

[91] AGS *Estado* 807/36bis, «Escriptura ad cautelam», 4 de enero de 1554. <<

[92] *CODOIN*, III, pp. 473-477, María a Felipe, 4 de febrero de 1554. <<

[93] *CDCV*, IV, pp. 109 y 110, Instrucciones de Felipe a Juana, 12 de julio de 1554. <<

[94] Fernández y Fernández de Retana, *España*, p. 344, Felipe a Antonio de Rojas, c. 20 de julio de 1554. <<

[95] Rodríguez-Salgado, «Los últimos combates», p. 93, Instrucciones de Carlos a Hubremont, 4 de agosto de 1554. <<

[96] Malfatti, *The accession*, pp. 141 y 144, Barahona a su tío Antonio, en forma de diario. Muchos historiadores han discutido sobre en qué lengua conversaba la pareja: Barahona la fijó por escrito. Otros detalles en Elder, *The copie*, sigs. Aiv y Bi. <<

[97] Muñoz, *Viaje*, p. 97. <<

[98] *Ibid*., p. 118 (carta de octubre de 1554), pp. 77-78 (relato de Muñoz). <<

[99] *CODOIN*, III, pp. 526-529, Ruy Gómez a Eraso, 26 y 29 de julio de 1554; BR Ms II-2257, Francisco de Ibarra a Granvela, Milán, 13 de abril de 1559. <<

[100] HHStA, *Spanien, Hofkorrespondenz,* Karton 1, Mappe 4/118, Felipe a Maximiliano, 22 de octubre de 1554, ológrafa; *CSPSp,* XIII, p. 102, Renard a Carlos, 23 de noviembre de 1554; e *ibid*., p. 124, María Tudor a Carlos, 20 de diciembre de 1554, ológrafa. <<

[101] Gachard, *Voyages*, IV, pp. 20-21 <<

[102] *CSPV*, VI parte 1.ª, pp. 147-149 y 177-179, Giovanni Michiel al dogo y al Senado de Venecia, Londres, 5 de agosto y 3 de septiembre de 1555. <<

[103] *APC*, V, 53, orden del 27 de julio de 1554. <<

[104] *CSPV*, VI parte 1.ª, pp. 176 y 190, Pole a Felipe, Richmond, 2 y 16 de septiembre de 1555, copias conservadas en un registro de cartas de Pole. (María y Marta aparecen en el Evangelio de Lucas 10: 38-42, 11:20 y 12:1-8.) <<

[105] DH, III, pp. 29-30 (interrogatorio por «abonos», pregunta 63, intervención de Carranza) y p. 186 (Felipe). <<

[106] DH, II, p. 568, testimonio de Carranza, 4 de septiembre de 1559; Duffy, *Fires of faith*, p. 7 <<

[107] DH, III, p. 23, testimonio de Carranza, y p. 185, declaración bajo juramento de Felipe II durante el proceso de Carranza, 14 de octubre de 1562; *GRM*, I, pp. 297-300, Carlos a Juana, 25 de mayo de 1558. <<

[108] Kamen, *Felipe*, pp. 60-61, citando una correspondencia del mes de septiembre de 1554. <<

[109] *GRM, Introduction*, p. 87, n.º 1, «Sommaire description» de la ceremonia. <<

[110] *Ibid*. p. 98. <<

[111] Alba, *Epistolario*, I, p. 258, Alba a Ruy Gómez, Milán, 11 de julio de 1555. <<

[112] *CODOIN,* II, pp. 430-431, Felipe a Fernando, 20 de noviembre de 1556. <<

[113] Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, p. 764, Felipe a Juana, 17 de septiembre de 1556; AGS *Estado,* 112/226-229, Juana a Felipe, 21 de noviembre de 1556; *GRM*, II, pp. 184-185, cédula real de 28 de abril de 1557. <<

[114] Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, pp. 54-59, Instrucciones a Ruy Gómez, 2 de febrero de 1557. <<

[115] BL *Addl.* 28,264/10-12v, Felipe a Manuel Filiberto, Bruselas, 27 de julio 1557, cifrado pero con posdata ológrafa del rey. <<

[116] BL *Addl.* 28,264/17-19 y 26-27, Felipe a Manuel Filiberto,

Cambrai, 6, 7 y 9 de agosto de 1557, cifradas con largas posdatas ológrafas. <<

[117] Tellechea Idígoras, *Carranza y Pole*, p. 263, Carranza a Villagarcía, 28 de agosto de 1557; AGS *Estado* 153/103, Feria a Zayas, San Lorenzo, 9 de agosto de 1571, víspera del decimocuarto aniversario de la batalla. <<

[118] Sigüenza, p. 8. Véase también capítulo 7. <<

[119] HSA *Altamira*, 7/VI/36, «Traslado de una carta que Christóbal Vázquez de Ávila escribió», 30 de agosto de 1557; *CODOIN*, II, p. 496, «Relación» enviada por Felipe a Fernando, 29 de agosto de 1557; Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 71, Felipe a Juana, 2 de septiembre de 1557. <<

[120] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II*, I, 144; Verzosa, *Anales*, pp. 62-63. <<

[121] AGS *Estado K* 1490/78, Felipe a Carlos, 28 de agosto de 1557. <<

[122] Kamen, *El enigma*, p. 60, Felipe a Manuel Filiberto, Bruselas, 21 de octubre de 1557. <<

[123] AGS *Estado* 128/326 Carlos a Felipe, Yuste, 15 de noviembre de 1557, con una posdata ológrafa; y 317, «Relación de cartas del emperador a Su Magestad». <<

[124] Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, 116-17, Felipe a Lord Wentworth, Bruselas, 2 de enero de 1558. <<

[125] Tellechea Idígoras, *Carranza y Pole*, pp. 268-269, Carranza a Villagarcía, 20 de enero de 1558. <<

[126] Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, I, pp. 120-121, Felipe a Pole, 21 de enero de 1558, e Instrucción para Feria, 28 de enero; *ibid*., pp. 153 y 191-194, Feria a Felipe, 10 de marzo y 18 de mayo de 1558. <<

[127] FCDM, AH R7-5, 9 y 10, Felipe a Feria, 18 de febrero, 17 de marzo y 5 abril de 1558, todas ológrafas. <<

[128] FCDM, AH R7-4, 6 y 9, Felipe a Feria, 30 de enero, 27 de febrero y 17 de marzo de 1558, todas ológrafas. <<

[129] *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, 40-43, Feria a Felipe, Greenwich, 1 de mayo de 1558; FCDM, AH R7-12 y 13, Felipe a Feria, 7 y 14 de mayo de 1558, ambas ológrafas. <<

[130] Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, pp. 46-47 (el «contento» de Felipe) y 72-73 (reunión del consejo). <<

[131] *Ibid.*, pp. 101-103 (26 de octubre de 1558). <<

[132] Rodríguez-Salgado y Adams, «The count of Feria's dispatch», pp. 319-320, Feria a Felipe, 14 de noviembre de 1558. <<

[133] Malfatti, *The accession*, p. 149, Juan de Barahona a su tío, 25 de octubre de 1554; Hegarty, «Carranza and the English universities», p. 160, John Jewel a Heinrich Bullinger, 20 de marzo de 1559. <<

[134] Duffy, *Fires of faith*, p. 187 <<

[135] Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, p. 109 (12 de noviembre de 1558); FCDM, AH R7-19, Felipe a Feria, 25 de noviembre de 1558, ológrafa; *GRM*, I, pp. 447-448, Felipe a Juana, 4 de diciembre de 1558. <<

[136] TR, II, p. 523, Fresneda al cardenal Caraffa, 11 de diciembre de 1558; FCDM, AH R7-27 Felipe a Feria, 27 de diciembre de 1558, ológrafa. <<

[137] AGS *Estado* 128/340, comentario de Felipe a Francisco de Eraso escrito al dorso de una carta de María de Hungría fechada el 10 de mayo de 1558. <<

[138] AGS, 26/143, poder a Ruy Gómez y al duque de Alburquerque, Londres, 13 de abril de 1557; y PR 26 29/35 codicilo firmado por Felipe, Gante, 5 de agosto de 1559. <<

[139] Aunque este capítulo contiene ejemplos de todo el reinado, se centra en el periodo anterior a 1580, cuando el rey cambió

sus métodos administrativos. El capítulo 16 analiza su estilo de gobierno durante el periodo posterior. <<

[140] París, *Négociations*, p. 49, el obispo de Limoges al cardenal de Lorena y el duque de Guisa, Gante, 27 de julio de 1559; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 670, notas de Donà, 1574; Íñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, fol. 15, sermón del doctor Aguilar de Terrones, 19 de octubre de 1598. <<

[141] FCDM, *AH,* R7-10, Felipe a Feria, 5 de abril de 1558, ológrafa; AGS *Estado* 527/5, Felipe a Gonzalo Pérez, con respuestas, 24-25 de marzo de 1565; IVdeDJ 53/VI/51, y BZ 142/9, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, con respuestas, 15 de mayo de 1577 y 29 de noviembre de 1578. <<

[142] Álvarez-Nogal y Chamley, «Debt policy», p. 192. <<

[143] HSA *Altamira* 1/I/4, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 1578). Véanse otros ejemplos en *FBD*, 170. <<

[144] NA, SP 70/136 fol. 38, Henry Cobham al barón Burghley, Madrid, 14 de noviembre de 1575; ASVe *SDS* 20/68, Lippomano a Venecia, 14 de abril de 1587; Birch, *Memoirs*, p. 82, Anthony Standen a Burghley, 8 de septiembre de 1592. <<

[145] RAH, *Salazar y Castro Ms* A-51/107v-8, Felipe a don Luis de Ávila, Monzón, 6 de octubre de 1552; HSA *Altamira* 1/I/40, Bernardo de Bolea, vicecanciller de Aragón, a Felipe, s. f. (pero 1572); BL *Ms Addl.* 28,262/599-601, Antonio Pérez a Felipe y contestación, s. f. (pero 1577); Muro, *La princesa*, apéndice 36, Pazos a Felipe con rescripto, 12 de mayo de 1579; AHN *Inq* libro 249/534v-5, Felipe al obispo de Cartagena, 9 de marzo de 1588, copia de registro. <<

[146] BL *Addl.* 28,399/20, Felipe al virrey de Sicilia, 20 de enero de 1559. <<

[147] Escudero, *Felipe II*, pp. 459-460; TMLM Ms 129960, Antonio Pérez a Felipe, y contestación, 30 de noviembre de 1574; BL Eg 1506/92-94 Quiroga a Felipe, con rescriptos, 15 y

19 de noviembre de 1578. <<

[148] IVdeDJ 55/XI/149-150, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 4 de agosto de 1588; BL *Addl.* 28,262/137, Felipe a Antonio Pérez, 12 de febrero de 1577. <<

[149] BL *Addl.* 28,263/7, billete de san Felipe s. f. (las dos primeras citas); Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 477; IVdeDJ 55/X/181, Felipe al duque de Alburquerque, octubre de 1587, borrador; AHN *Inq* libro 284/107, Quiroga a Felipe, y respuesta, 21 de abril de 1577. <<

[150] DH, III, pp. 404-405, testimonio de Felipe, 13 de octubre de 1562, en el proceso de Carranza; BL *Addl.* 28,263/432, Vázquez a Felipe II y rescripto, 11 de agosto de 1587, sobre el «profeta» Piedrola. <<

[151] IVdeDJ 53/3/65 y 51/170, Vázquez a Felipe, con rescriptos, 8 de junio de 1574 y 20 de julio de 1575; IVdeDJ 56, paquete 6-2, s. fol., Hernando de Ávalos a Vázquez, con apostilla del rey, 25 de marzo de 1576. Véanse otros ejemplos en *FBD*, pp. 179-180. <<

[152] HSA *Altamira* 1/III-7, Felipe a Vázquez, Madrid, 18 de noviembre de 1573. La confusión de Felipe sobre el tema no debería sorprendernos: incluso hoy en día los economistas y los historiadores de la economía no logran ponerse de acuerdo sobre la situación económica del rey; por ejemplo, compárense los análisis —incompatibles— publicados en 2014 por Álvarez-Nogal y Chamley, «Debt policy», y Drelichman y Voth, *Lending*. <<

[153] IVdeDJ 53/4/169 y 53/3/76, BL *Addl.* 28,699/103, y Riba, pp. 105-106, Felipe a Vázquez, y respuestas, 12 de septiembre de 1575, 26 de julio de 1574, y 22 y 23 de abril de 1577. <<

[154] BZ 144/11, Vázquez a Felipe, 20 de mayo de 1574; HSA *Altamira* 5/1/13, Maximiliano de Austria a Jerónimo Gassol, Alcalá, 27 de diciembre de 1586. <<

[155] HSA *Altamira* 5/III-17, Vázquez a Juan Fernández de Espinosa, 12 de enero de 1586; BNF, *Ms. Esp*. 132/179-180, Pérez a don Juan de Vargas Mexía, 26 de enero de 1579; Herrera Oria, *Armada Invencible*, p. 152, Idiáquez y Moura a Medina Sidonia, 22 de febrero de 1588; BL *Addl.* 28,377/110v, marqués de Poza a Moura, 7 de septiembre de 1595 (contestación fechada el día 9). <<

[156] TMLM Ms 129961, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 3 de octubre de 1578; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 105-107 y 286-288, «Juicio sobre Felipe II» por Caetani, Madrid, 13 de septiembre de 1598. <<

[157] París, *Dépêches*, pp. 558-560, memoria del embajador francés en España, 26 de septiembre de 1560. <<

[158] Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, pp. 199-201, «Vida y cosas notables» del doctor Diego de Simancas. Simancas estaba en lo cierto: Quiroga había apoyado a Pazos, una persona casi desconocida por el rey. Véase AHN *Inq* libro 284/71-2, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 4 de marzo de 1577. <<

[159] BL *Addl.* 28,399/20, Felipe al virrey de Sicilia, 20 de enero de 1559, copia; BZ 141/108, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 1 de mayo de 1586. <<

[160] Escudero, *Felipe II*, pp. 531-532, Gassol a Felipe y rescripto, 14 de noviembre de 1594. <<

[161] BZ 144/33, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 6 de diciembre de 1574; IVdeDJ 51/17, Felipe a Vázquez, 17 de julio de 1573; IVdeDJ 21/716, apostilla real en la carta de fray Antonio de San Pablo a Vázquez, 17 de noviembre de 1581. <<

[162] Donà, p. 350, carta a Venecia, 23 de agosto de 1571; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 669. <<

[163] *GCP*, I, p. 358, Gonzalo Pérez a Armenteros, 30 de mayo de 1565; AA, 56/63, Zayas a Alba, 30 de junio de 1567. <<

[164] París, *Négociations*, p. 66, el obispo de Limoges a Francisco II, 4 de agosto de 1559. <<

[165] MHSI, *Borgia*, III, p. 482, Borja a Felipe, 5 de mayo de 1559; AGS *Estado,* 148/181, el conde de Chinchón al gobernador de Milán, 12 de diciembre de 1566; AA 44/81-83, doctor Juan Milio a Juan de Albornoz, 12 de julio de 1571; Douais, II, p. 88, Fourquevaux a Catalina de Médicis, 6 de julio de 1569. <<

[166] IVdeDJ 81/1251, Requesens a Zúñiga, noviembre de 1572. Véase Janis, *Groupthink*, para los costes del «pensamiento grupal», la práctica administrativa que promovía Espinosa. <<

[167] AMAE (P) *MDFDE* 239/126-35, Felipe a Covarrubias, s. f. (pero octubre de 1572), copia; Instrucción secreta de Carlos V, 6 de mayo de 1543 (véase capítulo 1). <<

[168] BZ 144/1, Vázquez a Felipe, s. f. (pero marzo de 1573). <<

[169] *DHME*, V, pp. 57 y 81, entradas correspondientes al 7 de octubre de 1572 y al 5 de marzo de 1573; Poole, «The politics of *Limpieza de Sangre*», p. 382. <<

[170] BZ 144/16 y 141/9, y BL *Addl.* 28,263/222, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 6 de noviembre de 1574, 24 de julio de 1577 y 14 de abril de 1579. <<

[171] Cálculos de Rodríguez-Salgado, «The Court», p. 226, a partir del *Diurnal* de Gracián. <<

[172] BZ 44/116-117, Vázquez a Felipe, y respuesta, 28 de febrero y 3 de marzo de 1575; HSA *Altamira* 1/I/4, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 1578). <<

[173] *DHME*, V, pp. 42, 81 y 89, entradas correspondientes al 11 de julio de 1572 y al 5 de marzo y 5 de abril de 1573 respectivamente. <<

[174] BZ 141/11, Felipe a Vázquez, El Escorial, 25 de junio de 1577. <<

[175] *CCG*, IV, p. 558, Granvela a Maximilien Morillon, Nápoles, 11 de mayo de 1573; AA *Montijo* caja 34-1/72, Granvela al duque de Villahermosa, Roma, 13 de julio de 1576. <<

[176] BR Ms II-2291, s. fol., Pérez a Granvela, 16 de abril de 1560; Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, serie I, p. 426, Chantonnay a Granvela, Viena, 6 de octubre de 1565. <<

[177] París, *Négociations*, p. 562, memoria del 26 de septiembre de 1560; Douais, II, p. 338, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 31 de marzo de 1571; y Binchy, «An Irish ambassador», p. 371, el cardenal de Como al nuncio Ormanetto, 2 de julio de 1577. <<

[178] BR Ms II-2291/224-225, Córdoba a Granvela, 3 de septiembre de 1560; Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, pp. 100-101, Córdoba a Alba, 1 de febrero de 1571; AA, 32/42, Córdoba al prior don Hernando de Toledo, 4 de agosto de 1574. <<

[179] BL *Addl.* 28, 350/233 y IV de DJ 61/130, Felipe a Hoyo, diciembre de 1565, y abril de 1567. <<

[180] *DHME*, V, p. 100. <<

[181] AHN *Inq* libro 100/242, Felipe a Quiroga, 1 de septiembre 1574, ológrafa; IVdeDJ 51/49, Felipe a Vázquez, 30 de agosto de 1575. <<

[182] IVdeDJ 61/19, Pedro de Hoyo a Felipe, y respuesta, 22 de mayo de 1562; BZ 144/34, Felipe a Vázquez, 10 de diciembre de 1574. <<

[183] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 669 (Donà); *CCG*, XI, p. 272, Granvela a Margarita de Parma, 21 de septiembre de 1584. <<

[184] BCR, *Ms.* 2417/39, Silva a Esteban de Ibarra, 13 de julio de 1589. <<

[185] Sánchez, *El monasterio de El Escorial*, pp. 207-209, cartas del prior de El Escorial, 27 de agosto y 8 de septiembre de

1572. <<

[186] Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 457 n.º 1051, citando una «Relación» del embajador imperial Dietrichstein (1563-1572); Donà, p. 319, carta a Venecia del 3 de julio de 1571. <<

[187] Riba, pp. 105-106, Vázquez a Felipe, y respuesta, 23 de abril de 1577; IVdeDJ 68/286, Hernando de Vega a Felipe y rescripto, 22 de agosto de 1583. <<

[188] BL *Addl.* 28,263/34, Felipe a Vázquez, 23 de mayo de 1576; IVdeDJ 51/178, del mismo al mismo, 6 de mayo de 1578; Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 574, del mismo al mismo, 3 de abril de 1574. <<

[189] ARSI, *Epistolae Hispaniae* 143/293-294v, informe ológrafo de Acosta, 16 de septiembre de 1588. <<

[190] Donà, pp. 39-40 y 198, cartas a Venecia, 6 de junio de 1570 y 4 de febrero de 1571. <<

[191] IVdeDJ 53/5/15, Vázquez a Felipe y contestación, 27 de enero de 1576; Donà, pp. 677-681, carta a Venecia, 17 de abril de 1573; IVdeDJ 60/96, Felipe a Pérez, s. f. (pero 17 de abril de 1573). <<

[192] Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, p. 198; Mosconi, *La nunziatura*, pp. 16-17, Novara a Rusticucci, 18 de octubre de 1586. <<

[193] Douais, II, pp. 18 y 21, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX y Catalina de Médicis, 18 de noviembre de 1568; Donà, 393-394, carta al dogo de Venecia, 26 de noviembre de 1571. <<

[194] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 257, Lorenzo Priuli en 1576; Sigüenza, p. 57. <<

[195] TMLM Ms 129978, Instrucción secreta para don Juan de Austria, 23 de mayo de 1568, borrador corregido por Felipe (con ligeras diferencias respecto a la versión publicada en Van der Hammen, *Don Juan de Austria*, fols. 42-44). <<

[196] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, pp. 413-414. <<

[197] *DHME*, II, p. 47, codicilo del 23 de agosto de 1597. <<

[198] *DHME*, V, pp. 37-38, *Diurnal* de Gracián, entrada del 10 de junio de 1572; BL *Addl.* 28,263/105-106, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, San Lorenzo, 6 de abril de 1577. <<

[199] IVdeDJ 55/IX/111, Felipe a Vázquez, 26 de julio de 1586; BZ 143/6 y 141/84, del mismo al mismo, 4 de enero de 1588 y 19 de febrero de 1586. <<

[200] ASVe, *SDS* 12/44, Morosini al dogo de Venecia, Madrid, 12 de agosto de 1579; Sigüenza, pp. 92 y 158. Sobre el arresto de don Carlos, véase capítulo 10; sobre el de Pérez, véase capítulo 14. <<

[201] AGS *Estado* 153/54, Gracián a Zayas, 9 de agosto de 1571; IVdeDJ 67/287a, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 28 de junio de 1574; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 113, Felipe a sus hijas, 30 de marzo de 1584. <<

[202] *CODOIN*, VII, p. 366 («Memorias de San Jerónimo»). <<

[203] AGS, *CC Libros de cédulas* 321/248-9, 272-5, 184-186v, 299-301, 303; y Sigüenza, p. 69 (moriscos); Bouza Álvarez, *Imagen y propaganda*, pp. 144-146 (lugares de oración en 1574); BL Eg 1506/16-17, Felipe a Gaspar de Quiroga, obispo de Cuenca e inquisidor general, 8 de marzo de 1574. <<

[204] HSA *Altamira* 1/I/46, Diego de Covarrubias, presidente del Consejo Real, a Felipe, y rescripto, 11 de septiembre de 1577. Sobre la decisión de romper la tregua en los Países Bajos, véase capítulo 13. <<

[205] IVdeDJ 56/6/19, Vázquez a Chaves y contestación, 24 de junio de 1581; HSA *Altamira* 1/III-8, fray Diego de Chaves a Felipe, 20 de mayo de 1587. <<

[206] IVdeDJ 56/6/19, Vázquez a Chaves y respuesta, «de nuestra celda», 24 de junio de 1581; Fernández, *Historia*, pp.

278-279, Chaves a Felipe, 19 de marzo de 1592, y billete a Moura. <<

[207] Calvete de Estrella, *Felicíssimo Viaje*, p. 663, descripción de Vicente Álvarez; HSA *Altamira* 7/VI/36, «Traslado de una carta que Christóbal Vázquez de Ávila escribió», 30 de agosto de 1557. <<

[208] Sigüenza, pp. 367, 130 y 175; Estal, *Personalidad religiosa*, 159, «un diente con billete autógrafo de Felipe II». <<

[209] *PEG*, V, p. 643, y VI, p. 149, Felipe a Granvela, 24 de agosto de 1559 y 7 de septiembre de 1560; AGS *Estado* 527/5, Felipe a Gonzalo Pérez, 24-25 de marzo de 1565, todas ológrafas. <<

[210] Ejemplos de regocijo de BZ 166/92 y 100, rescripto del rey sobre cartas de Hernando de Vega a Felipe, 9 y 11 de noviembre de 1586; quejas de AHN *Inq* libro 284/96-7 (fol. moderna 107), Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 21 de abril de 1578; BL *Addl.* 28,262/558-9, Antonio Pérez a Felipe, s. f. (pero octubre de 1578). <<

[211] IVdeDJ 53/3/56, y 144/36, Vázquez a Felipe con respuestas, 13 de mayo y 11 de diciembre de 1574. <<

[212] BPU, *Ms. Favre* 30/73v, Felipe a don Luis de Requesens, 20 de octubre de 1573, copia de original ológrafo; IVdeDJ 37/155, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 22 de enero de 1576; AHN *Inq* libro 101/325, rescripto de Felipe a una consulta del Consejo de la Suprema Inquisición, 11 de enero de 1592. <<

[213] AHN *Inq* libro 284/81 [fol. moderna 85], y BL *Eg.* 1506/94, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 20 de octubre de 1577 y 19 de noviembre de 1578. Véanse los capítulos 13 y 14 sobre el papel de Quiroga a la hora de establecer la política respecto a la rebelión de los Países Bajos. <<

[214] AGS *Estado K* 1530/53bis, Felipe a don Diego de Zúñiga, su embajador en París que le había transmitido la noticia de la

matanza, 18 de septiembre de 1572; Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, II, pp. 395-396, St.-Gouard a Carlos IX, 12 de septiembre de 1572. <<

[215] AGS, *CC, Libros de cédulas* 321/248v-249, 272-275, 284-286v («plegarias por la unión de la religión cristiana»); González-Novalín, *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, III-2, p. 21, Felipe a Pío IV y su embajador en Roma, 30 de noviembre de 1562; AGS, PR 21/133, Instrucciones de Felipe al conde de Luna, su enviado en el Concilio, 26 de octubre de 1562, añadido ológrafo. <<

[216] Fernández Terricabras, *Felipe II*, p. 105, Felipe al conde de Luna. <<

[217] *Novísima Recopilación de las leyes*, I.I.13, pragmática del 12 de julio de 1564 para Castilla; Fernández Terricabras, *Felipe II,* pp. 113 y 118, el doctor Velasco al vicecanciller de Aragón, 25 de julio de 1564 y Felipe a todos los cabildos, 4 de diciembre de 1564. <<

[218] Fernández Terricabras, *Felipe II*, pp. 123-131, instrucciones de Felipe a los comisarios; Fernández Collado, «Felipe II y su mentalidad reformadora», p. 463, Toledo a Felipe. <<

[219] AGS *Estado* 897/3, Felipe al cardenal Pacheco, 1 de enero de 1565; Fernández Terricabras, «La reforma de las órdenes», p. 193, Felipe a Requesens, mayo de 1569. <<

[220] Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, pp. 284-286, Felipe a Granvela, 10 de julio de 1581. <<

[221] Hinojosa, *Felipe II*, pp. 106-107, don Francisco de Vargas a Felipe, 29 de diciembre de 1559; Astraín, *Historia*, III, pp. 703-708, Felipe al conde de Olivares, 9 de diciembre de 1588. <<

[222] Las cartas de Felipe a Roma a favor de sus candidatos para los beneficios de Castilla están registradas en AHN, *Consejos suprimidos: Libros de Iglesia* 1-4. <<

[223] AMAE (P), *MDFDE* 237/59, Felipe II a Olivares, 30 de septiembre de 1585; Cloulas, «La monarchie catholique», ofrece un listado de los pensionistas. <<

[224] Serrano, II, p. 515, Requesens a Felipe, 10 de diciembre de 1568; BCR, Ms 2174/76v-77, Felipe II al embajador Zúñiga, 17 de julio de 1569; y Serrano, I, p. 444, «Memorial de agravios». <<

[225] Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, II, p. 112, Felipe a Gregorio XIII, 10 de agosto de 1580, ológrafa. <<

[226] Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, pp. 284-286, Felipe a Granvela, 10 de julio de 1581, ológrafa. <<

[227] *BMO*, I, 42, Felipe a Alba, 22 de enero de 1570. <<

[228] AA, 7/58, Felipe a Alba, 14 de julio de 1571. <<

[229] AGS *Estado* 153/68 y BL *Addl.* 28,336/70, doctor Velasco a Zayas y a Espinosa, ambas del 27 de julio de 1571; AGS *Estado* 153/72, Velasco a Zayas, 1 de agosto de 1571; y 153/103, Feria a Zayas, 9 de agosto de 1571. <<

[230] *BMO*, I, pp. 57-62, Felipe a Alba, 4 de agosto de 1571, y Alba a Felipe, 27 de agosto de 1571. <<

[231] *CCG*, XII, 339-341, Felipe a Parma, 17 de agosto de 1585; AGS *Estado* 165/2-3, Felipe II al cardenal Alberto, 14 de septiembre de 1587, para comunicar al marqués de Santa Cruz; Oria, *La Armada Invencible*, 210-214, Felipe al duque de Medina Sidonia, 1 de julio de 1588. <<

[232] BZ 145/76, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 10 de noviembre de 1588; KML *MSP: CR* 6/174, Felipe al duque de Medina Sidonia, 15 de diciembre de 1590; IVdeDJ 51/1, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 8 de febrero de 1591. <<

[233] Abad, «Dos inéditos del siglo XVI», p. 332 (parece que Torres escribió este tratado entre 1559 y 1563); Márquez Villanueva, «Giovan Giorgio Trission y el soneto de Hernando

de Acuña». <<

[234] Los textos de las misas por Escobedo y Rogier, y de *Quasi stella matutina,* por De las infantas, se encuentran en Sierra Pérez, *Música*. <<

[235] *CODOIN*, III, pp. 177-178, don Juan a don García de Toledo, 17 de octubre de 1576; Porreño, *Historia*, pp. 346-347, don Juan a Margarita de Parma, 26 de octubre de 1576. <<

[236] *MHSI*, LX: *Ribadeneira*, II, pp. 492-493, Ruy Gómez al padre Pedro de Ribadeneira, Bruselas, 13 de abril de 1559; Fernández Álvarez, *La princesa*, pp. 102-105, basado en el cap. XVII del *Libro de las fundaciones* de Teresa de Jesús. <<

[237] *Álava*, p. 97, Álava a Alba, 17 de marzo de 1568; AGRB, *Audience* 1728/2/77, Alba al conde de Bossu, 29 de agosto de 1572. <<

[238] BZ 136/19, Pérez a Mateo Vázquez, 13 de noviembre de 1575 («Yo me parto […] a mi romería»); IVdeDJ 60/209-10, Pérez a Felipe, 1 de enero de 1576; HSA *Altamira*, 1/II-52 (IV), Barajas a Mateo Vázquez, 15 de diciembre de 1584; TMLM Ms 660, «Ciertas minutas de principio del año de 1587 sobre cosas de Inglaterra», borrador ológrafo de Idiáquez. <<

[239] IVdeDJ 51/31 y HSA *Altamira* 1/I/24, Vázquez a Felipe, 31 de mayo de 1574 y 13 de agosto de 1578. <<

[240] IVdeDJ 24/38, Ovando a Felipe, 16 de enero de 1574, ológrafo; *CCG*, X, pp. 331-332, Granvela a Idiáquez, 21 de agosto de 1583. <<

[241] Campanella, *Monarchie d'Espagne* (versión original italiana escrita entre 1598-1605), pp. 10-13. <<

[242] Clausewitz, *On War*, 119, 139. <<

[243] HSA, *Altamira* 5/III-14, respuesta de Vázquez, 8 de diciembre de 1585, a una carta de Juan Fernández de Espinosa.

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[244] Ruiz, *A king travels*, pp. 7 y 13. <<

[245] Firpo, *Relazione*, VIII, pp. 438, 507 y 866 (Soranzo, Cavalli, y Contarini). <<

[246] Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes*, I, p. 126. Según algunos, el autor era el príncipe don Carlos. <<

[247] *DHME*, V, pp. 58-60, del *Diurnal* de Antonio Gracián. <<

[248] AGPM, *CR* 2/142v-143r, patente para Juan Bautista de Toledo, 12 de agosto de 1561 (citando una cédula fechada el 15 de julio de 1559); Gachard, *La Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, II, 170, St.-Sulpice a Carlos IX, 12 de junio de 1564. <<

[249] IVdeDJ 61/386 y 85-6, Felipe a Hoyo, con respuesta real, s. f. exacta (pero abril y agosto de 1565); AGS, *CSR* 247/1 fol. 126, Juan Bautista de Toledo a Hoyo, 13 de agosto de 1565, con rescripto real. <<

[250] AGS, *CSR* 133/83, Felipe II a los testamentarios de los descargos del emperador, Bruselas, 27 de julio de 1559. <<

[251] AGPM, *CR* 2/99 y 125v-126r, Felipe II al general de la orden de San Jerónimo, 16 de abril y 20 de junio de 1561; AGS, *CSR* 258/265, el general a Felipe II, 1 de enero de 1562. <<

[252] *DHME*, I, p. 12 (Villacastín, «Memorias»); BL *Addl.* 28,350/169, Felipe a Hoyo, septiembre de 1564. <<

[253] *DHME*, III, incluye la «Cédula por la cual Su Majestad altera algunos capítulos de los de la instrucción que tiene dada para la obra del monasterio de Sant Lorenzo el Real» y la «Instrucción para el gobierno y prosecución de la fábrica y obra de Sanct Lorenzo el Real» de 1569; en esta última, entre otras cosas, otorgaba al prior de San Lorenzo el poder de despedir a los aparejadores que no cumplieran sus órdenes. <<

[254] *CODOIN*, VII, pp. 163-164, «Memorias» de San Jerónimo;

DHME, I, p. 20; Sigüenza, p. 452. <<

[255] Wilkinson Zerner, *Juan de Herrera*, p. 54. <<

[256] AGS *Estado* 153/54 y 77, Antonio Gracián y doctor Velasco a Zayas, ambas fechadas el 9 de agosto de 1571. <<

[257] Mulcahy, *Philip II*, p. 50. <<

[258] Eliot, *Ortho-epia Gallica*, pp. 44-45; Howell¸ *Epistolae,* sección III, pp. 115-117, a sir T. S., s. f. (pero 9 de marzo de 1623). <<

[259] Lhermite, *El Pasatiempos*, pp. 376-381, Villacastín a Lhermite, 4 de marzo de 1600, seguido de los propios cálculos de Lhermite. <<

[260] AGS, *CC* 409/26, fray Hernando de Ciudad Real a Felipe II, 9 de noviembre de 1571, con apostillas reales. <<

[261] *CODOIN*, VII, p. 141 (San Jerónimo). <<

[262] Aguiló Alonso, *Orden y decoro*, pp. 123-202; García Tapia, «El Escorial», pp. 420-421. <<

[263] *CODOIN*, VII, p. 20, observación de fray Marcos de Cardona; IVdeDJ 61/1, Felipe a Hoyo, s. f. (pero probablemente mayo de 1563). <<

[264] BZ 146/69, Felipe a Hoyo, s. f. (pero 1567). <<

[265] IVdeDJ 61/7, Felipe a Hoyo, 26 de diciembre de 1561; AGPM, *CR* 2/254, cédula de Felipe II, 8 de noviembre de 1562; Wilkinson Zerner, «Construcción de una imagen», p. 332. <<

[266] IVdeDJ 61/105, Felipe II a Hoyo, 10 de febrero de 1566; *CODOIN*, VII, p. 157, «Memorias» de San Jerónimo. <<

[267] IVdeDJ 7/113, don Luis Osorio a Mateo Vázquez, 13 de diciembre de 1584, con rescripto real; AGP, *CR* 7/66v, orden de 19 de marzo de 1588. <<

[268] Sigüenza, p. 102; Lhermite, *El Pasatiempos*, pp. 103-104. <<

[269] Laguna, *Pedacio Dioscorides* (Amberes, 1555) y Franco, *Libro de enfermedades* (Sevilla, 1569), ambos citados en López Piñero, *Historia de la ciencia*, pp. 91-92. <<

[270] Puerto Sarmiento, «Los "destilatorios"», pp. 434-436, cita las cédulas reales; Sigüenza, p. 392. <<

[271] IVdeDJ 61/306, 339 y 360, y BL *Addl.* 28,350/315-326, todos ellos billetes s. f. intercambiados entre Felipe y Hoyo durante el invierno de 1562-1563. <<

[272] López Piñero, *Historia de la ciencia*, pp. 47-48 (Ondériz), 289-291 (Zúñiga). <<

[273] Véase capítulo 5 sobre la *Biblia Regia*; y Marías Franco, «Felipe II y los artistas», y Ramírez, *Dios Arquitecto*, pp. 215-241 y 249-251, sobre el interés de Felipe por *In Ezechielem explanationes*. <<

[274] Van't Hoff, *Jacob van Deventer*, p. 36, cédula de Felipe II, 1559. <<

[275] BNE Ms 5589/64, «Ynterrogatorio»; AGS *Estado* 157/104, «Instrución y memoria de las relaciones que se han de hazer y embiar a Su Magestad para la descripción y historia de los pueblos de España»; y *Estado,* 157/103, Felipe II al corregidor de Toledo, octubre de 1575, minuta <<

[276] Rodríguez, *Álava*, p. 181, Felipe II a don Francés de Álava, 28 de mayo de 1567. <<

[277] AGP, *CR* 6/210-212, cédulas para Lavanha, Ondériz y Georgio, todas del 25 de diciembre de 1582. <<

[278] Herrera, *Institución de la Academia Real Mathemática*, pp. 1, 4 y 19. <<

[279] IVdeDJ 61/131, Pedro de Hoyo a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 1561); Riba, p. 207, Felipe a Vázquez, con rescriptos, 21 de junio de 1579. <<

[280] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 14 n.º 27, publica la *Orden*

presentada por Mendoza en 1583. <<

[281] Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 576, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 10 de agosto y 21 de mayo de 1578; IVdeDJ 51/172, del mismo al mismo, 26 de mayo de 1578. <<

[282] NA, SP 94/1 fol. 9, Zayas a Antonio de Guaras, 7 de octubre de 1577; IVdeDJ 55/IX/155, Felipe a Vázquez, 8 de noviembre de 1586. <<

[283] Lhermite, *El Pasatiempos*, pp. 449-454 <<

[284] BL *Addl.* 28,699/114, Vázquez a Felipe II, con rescripto, 2 de mayo de 1577. <<

[285] FCDM, AH R7-5, Felipe a Feria, 18 de febrero de 1558; *PEG*, V, p. 491, Felipe a Ruy Gómez, 19 de febrero de 1559. <<

[286] IVdeDJ 53/5/140 y 53/6/39, Vázquez a Felipe II, con rescriptos, 14 de julio de 1576 y 13 de julio de 1577. <<

[287] *CODOIN*, VII, 385; Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, 334-336; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, 91, Felipe a las infantas, 17 de septiembre de 1582, y nota 196. <<

[288] IVdeDJ 51/189, Vázquez a Felipe, 20 de abril de 1586, y respuesta; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 181, Felipe a Catalina, 10 de junio de 1591. <<

[289] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 47, 61, 66 y 113, Felipe a las infantas, 26 de junio y 23 de octubre de 1581, 15 de enero de 1582 y Semana Santa de 1584. <<

[290] Riba, p. 179, Felipe II a Vázquez, s. f. (pero 1578); IVdeDJ 55/XI/121-122, Vázquez a Felipe II y respuesta, 27 de julio de 1588. <<

[291] AGS *Estado* 946/141a, Felipe II al conde de Olivares, embajador en Roma, 31 de marzo de 1585. <<

[292] *DHME*, V, p. 27; IVdeDJ 55/IX/93, Vázquez a Felipe II y respuesta, 8 de diciembre de 1586; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p.

85, Felipe a las infantas Isabel y Catalina, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, 1583. <<

[293] Bustamante García, «La arquitectura de Felipe II», p. 492, cursiva añadida. <<

[294] Kamen, *Felipe*, pp. 55, 92, 234. <<

[295] Smith, *Vita*, pp. 38-39, parte de la oración fúnebre por Magdalena, vizcondesa de Montague, de soltera Dacre, publicada en latín en 1609 por su capellán, a quien confesó estos detalles. Puesto que ella se casó en 1556, el suceso tuvo que acontecer en 1554 o 1555. En el original se lee *«vbi* faciem *suam forte ipsa lauabat»*, donde la palabra *facies* puede significar tanto «cara» como «figura». <<

[296] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, pp. 438-439, Soranzo, enero de 1565; Gachard, *Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris*, II, p. 177, St.-Sulpice to Charles IX, 7 de octubre de 1564. Ruy Gómez podría estar refiriéndose a doña Isabel Osorio. <<

[297] Belda, «Carta», pp. 474-475, Zúñiga a Felipe II, 3 de diciembre de 1578. Zúñiga, nacido en 1536, era hijo del homónimo ayo de Felipe y pasó mucho tiempo en la corte del rey, en España y en Flandes, hasta su salida para Italia en 1567. <<

[298] Valente, *Un dramma*, pp. 7-8, el caballero Bondi al cardenal Farnesio, 8 de febrero de 1586. <<

[299] *Relación de la Felicíssima Armada*, copia comentada por Burghley en la BL 192, fol. 17 (I); Yale University, Beinecke Library, *Osborn Shelves*, fol. 20; João de Teixiera, «The Anatomie of Spayne», p. 65. <<

[300] AGS *Estado* 128/378, Felipe a Juan Vázquez de Molina, 9 de diciembre de 1558, posdata ológrafa; FCDM, AH R7-19, Felipe a Feria, 25 de noviembre de 1558; Fernández Álvarez, *Tres embajadores*, pp. 215-219, Felipe a Feria, 28 de diciembre de 1558. <<

[301] *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, pp. 80-85, Feria a Felipe, 21 de noviembre de 1558. <<

[302] FCDM, AH, R7-19, Felipe a Feria, 25 de noviembre de 1558; *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, pp. 83 y 93, Feria a Felipe, 21 de noviembre y 14 de diciembre de 1558. <<

[303] Fernández Álvarez, *Tres embajadores*, pp. 215-219, Felipe a Feria, 28 de diciembre de 1558; Hatfield House, *Cecil Papers*, 133/188, Felipe a Isabel, 27 de diciembre de 1558. <<

[304] Véase, por ejemplo, NA SP 70/2 fol. 49, Felipe a Isabel, 20 de enero de 1559. <<

[305] *CODOIN*, LXXXVII, p. 111, Feria a Felipe, 29 de diciembre de 1558. <<

[306] González, «Apuntamientos», pp. 157-159, Felipe a Feria, 10 de enero de 1559. <<

[307] FCDM, AH R7-1 y 21, Felipe a Feria, 10 y 28 de enero de 1559, ológrafa. <<

[308] *CODOIN,* LXXXVII, pp. 133-134, «puntos» de Feria para ser transmitidos a Felipe. <<

[309] *Ibid.*, p. 141, Felipe a Feria, 23 de marzo de 1559. <<

[310] Brunelli, *Emanuele Filiberto*, pp. 101-103. <<

[311] *PEG*, V, pp. 585-587, Granvela a Feria, 3 de abril de 1559. <<

[312] FCDM, AH R7-23, Felipe a Feria, 21 de marzo de 1559, ológrafa. <<

[313] Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado*, I, pp. 85-86, Paulo IV a Felipe, 6 de mayo 1559 <<

[314] FCDM, AH R7-22, Felipe a Feria, 11 de febrero de 1559, ológrafa; *PEG*, V, 606, Felipe a Granvela, 24 de junio de 1559. <<

[315] BR Ms II-2320/124, Granvela a Juan Vázquez de Molina, 21 de julio de 1559. <<

[316] NA SP 70/6 fol. 29, Challoner a Isabel, Flesinga (Vlissingen), 3 de agosto de 1559, borrador. <<

[317] AGS *Estado* 137/227, Juana a Felipe, 14 de julio de 1559, descifrado con comentario ológrafo del rey. <<

[318] AGS, PR 26/169-170, Instrucción de Felipe a Ruy Gómez y al doctor Velasco y carta a Juana, ambos del 23 de julio de 1559. <<

[319] *GRM*, I, pp. 444-446, Quijada a Felipe, 28 de noviembre de 1558. <<

[320] *PEG*, V, pp. 628-630, Felipe a Granvela, 29 de julio de 1559. <<

[321] *Ibid.*, p. 643, Felipe a Granvela, 24 de agosto de 1559. <<

[322] TR, IV, pp. 318-323, Valdés a Felipe II, 14 de mayo de 1558. <<

[323] *Ibid.*, pp. 434-436, Felipe a Valdés y la Suprema, y *GRM*, I, p. 302 n.º 1, Felipe a Juana, ambos «del Campo», 6 de septiembre de 1558. <<

[324] González Novalín, *Inquisidor General*, II, pp. 214-221, Valdés a Paulo IV, 9 de septiembre de 1558, junto con la «relación». <<

[325] AGS PR 29/33, testamento de Felipe, Londres, 2 de julio de 1557, nombrando «la persona que yo oviere proveído por arzobispo de Toledo» para «la administración y gobierno general» de España, y para «regir y gobernar la persona del dicho príncipe» don Carlos. <<

[326] TR, IV, pp. 589-590, Felipe a Juana, s. f. (pero noviembre de 1558), copia. <<

[327] *Ibid.*, pp. 687-691, fray Hernando de San Ambrosio a Carranza, Bruselas, 5 de abril de 1559; DH, V, p. 183, Felipe a Carranza, Bruselas, 4 de abril de 1559, copia. <<

[328] TR, IV, pp. 680-683, Carranza a Felipe, borrador ológrafo,

s. f. <<

[329] *Ibid.*, pp. 600-601, breve de Paulo IV a Valdés, 7 de enero de 1559; y pp. 763-765, la Suprema a Felipe, Valladolid, 16 de mayo de 1559. <<

[330] *Ibid.*, pp. 831-832, Felipe a la Suprema, Bruselas, 26 de junio de 1559. <<

[331] *Ibid.*, p. 889, Juana a Carranza, 3 de agosto de 1559. <<

[332] TR, IV, pp. 696-697, Mandamiento de Valdés a la Universidad de Alcalá, 11 de abril de 1559. <<

[333] Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografías*, p. 157, relato de Diego de Simancas; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, 202. <<

[334] TR, IV, pp. 969-972, Pragmática del 22 de noviembre de 1559 (más tarde, Ley XXV de la Recopilación). <<

[335] *Ibid.*, pp. 953-954 y 995-996, Feria al obispo Quadra, Malinas, 4 de octubre de 1559 y 21 de enero de 1560. <<

[336] DH, II, p. 358, acusaciones de Carranza contra Valdés, 4 de septiembre de 1559. <<

[337] DH, V, pp. 336-338, respuesta de Carranza a los nuevos cargos presentados por el fiscal, 8 de enero de 1563. *Ibid.*, III, publica todas las «Testificaciones de tachas, indirectas y abonos». <<

[338] RAH *Proceso Carranza* 9/1804 [tomo XII], fol. 83v, testimonio de Felipe, 12 de enero de 1560. <<

[339] DH, III, pp. 404-405, testimonio de Felipe, 13 de octubre de 1562. <<

[340] *Ibid.*, III, pp. 182-188, respuestas de Felipe, 14 de octubre de 1562, donde se citan los fragmentos de apertura y cierre y las respuestas de Felipe a las preguntas 40, 42, 46 y 52. <<

[341] Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, II, pp. 44-45, 48 y 80, Felipe II a Gregorio XIII, s. f. (pero primavera de 1574), 21 de julio de 1574, ológrafa, y 11 de junio de 1576. <<

[342] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, p. 204; *GRM*, II, 465-469, Juana a Carlos, 8 de agosto de 1558. <<

[343] *GRM*, I, pp. 449-450, Quijada a Felipe, 13 de diciembre de 1558; AGS *Estado* 128/28, Felipe a Quijada, minuta, s. f., aparentemente dictada a Francisco de Eraso y enmendada por este. <<

[344] Gachard, *Don Juan*, pp. 51-52. <<

[345] Fernández de Retana, *España en tiempos de Felipe II*, I, p. 602; Alvar Ezquerra, *Felipe II*, p. 12, citando a Horozco. <<

[346] *PEG*, V, 673, Felipe a Granvela, 27 de diciembre de 1559; Alvar Ezquerra, *Felipe II*, p. 19, cédula real del 8 de mayo de 1561. <<

[347] AGPM, *CR* 1/242 y 2/36-38v, cédulas de Felipe, 14 de febrero de 1556, 22 de junio de 1557; y 2/52v-55, Felipe a Gaspar de Vega, 15 de febrero de 1559; Gerard, *De castillo a palacio*, pp. 12 y 73. <<

[348] *CODOIN*, XCVIII, pp. 53-54, «Las condiciones con que verná S. M. en la tregua», 5 de marzo de 1559; *ibid*. pp. 57-59, Felipe al conde de Luna, su embajador en la corte imperial, s. f. (pero abril de 1559), revocando su encargo de negociar la tregua; AGS *Estado* 1210/91, Felipe al gobernador de Milán, 8 de abril de 1559; AGS *Estado* 1124/278-302, Instrucciones de Felipe a sus ministros en Italia, 15 de junio de 1559. <<

[349] BNE Ms 5938/440-441v, «divisa» de Gabriel Rincón; Mameranus, *Carmen Gratulatorium*, ejemplar que todavía se encuentra en la Biblioteca de El Escorial. <<

[350] BR Ms II-2319/16, Pérez a Granvela, 6 de junio de 1560. <<

[351] París, *Négociations*, p. 555, Laubespine a Catalina de Médicis, 26 de septiembre de 1560. <<

[352] *CMPG*, II, pp. LXII-LXIII, Felipe a Margarita de Parma, 15 de

julio de 1562. <<

[353] AGRB *Audience* 475/84, Josse de Courtewille a Viglius, Madrid, 24 de mayo de 1563. <<

[354] BMB *Ms Granvelle* 8/189, Pérez a Granvela, 19 de febrero de 1564. <<

[355] IVdeDJ 61/1, Pedro de Hoyo a Felipe, s. f. (pero probablemente mayo de 1562). <<

[356] *PEG*, V, p. 674, Felipe a Granvela, 27 de diciembre de 1559; BR Ms II-2249, s. fol., Gonzalo Pérez a Granvela, 19 de noviembre de 1560; *PEG*, VI, p. 166, Granvela a Felipe, 12 de septiembre de 1560. <<

[357] Japikse, *Correspondentie*, I, pp. 143-144, Egmont a Orange, 1 de julio de 1559. <<

[358] Tellechea Idígoras, *Felipe II y el Papado*, I, p. 44, Felipe a Paulo IV, Bruselas, 24 de abril de 1559, carta ológrafa. <<

[359] AGRB, *Audience* 478/59-63, Instrucciones de Hornes a Alonso de Laloo, 12 de enero de 1567; [Strada], *Supplément*, II, pp. 267-268, Hornes a Eraso, 19 de diciembre de 1561. <<

[360] BNF, *Ms. F. f*, 15,587/3-7, memorial del obispo de Limoges, citando el análisis de François Baudouin, 1563. <<

[361] *CODOIN*, IV, p. 307, Felipe a Margarita, 23 de abril de 1564. <<

[362] AGRB, *Audience* 779/30, minutas de la reunión del Consejo de Estado, Bruselas, 24 de marzo de 1564. <<

[363] *CCG*, I, p. 27, el secretario Bave a Granvela, 4 de diciembre de 1565. <<

[364] AGRB *Audience* 779/120, minutas del Consejo de Estado, Bruselas, 26 de enero de 1565, en las que se informa de «*nouvelles de Constantinople*» recibidas a través de Venecia. <<

[365] *CMPT*, II, 51-53, memorial de Egmont a Felipe, 24 de marzo de 1565; AGS *Estado* 527/5, Felipe a Pérez, 24 de marzo

de 1565. <<

[366] AGS *Estado* 527/5, Felipe a Pérez, con respuestas, 24-25 de marzo de 1565. <<

[367] AGS *Estado* 527/4, Instrucción al conde de Egmont, 2 de abril de 1565. <<

[368] *PEG*, IX, p. 275, Granvela a Polweiler, 12 de junio de 1565; *GCP*, I, p. 349, Egmont a Felipe, 9 de abril de 1565. <<

[369] González Palencia, *Gonzalo Pérez*, II, p. 474, y AGS *Estado* 146/147, Pérez a Felipe y respuesta, 4 y 10 de abril de 1565. <<

[370] Wauters, *Mémoirs*, p. 268, relato de Hopperus sobre el informe de Egmont al Consejo de Estado, 5 de mayo de 1565. <<

[371] *CMPT*, I, p. 59, Margarita a Felipe II, 22 de julio de 1565; *Cahier van der Essen* X/19, Armenteros a Pérez, 10 de octubre de 1565. <<

[372] González Palencia, *Gonzalo Pérez*, II, p. 536, Pérez a Felipe, 3 de septiembre de 1565, con rescripto. <<

[373] Rodríguez-Salgado, «Amor, menosprecio y motines», p. 218, Guzmán de Silva a Ruy Gómez, 24 de noviembre de 1565. <<

[374] *CMPT*, II, p. 258, Margarita a Felipe, 19 de julio de 1566. <<

[375] UB, Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/2, Alonso de Laloo al conde de Hornes, Segovia, 3 de agosto de 1566. <<

[376] *CMPT*, II, pp. 269-274, Felipe a Margarita, 31 de julio de 1566; AGS *Estado* 531/52-53, «Registro de la scriptura que Su Magestad otorgó en el Bosque de Segouia a 9 de agosto de 1566»; Serrano, I, pp. 316-17, Felipe a don Luis de Requesens, su embajador en Roma, 12 de agosto de 1566; *CMPT*, II, 313-315, Felipe a Margarita, 9 de agosto de 1566. <<

[377] Gilles de Pélichy, «Contribution», pp. 105-106, Egmont a

Felipe, 29 de agosto de 1566; AGS *Estado* 530, s. fol., Margarita a Felipe, 27 de agosto de 1566; y *CMPT*, II, pp. 326-332, del mismo al mismo, 27 y 29 de agosto de 1566. <<

[378] UB, Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/4 y 5, Laloo a Hornes, Segovia, 20 y 26 de septiembre de 1566. Aunque descendiente de españoles, Laloo había nacido en los Países Bajos. <<

[379] IANTT, *TSO: CG*, Livro 210/14v, Pereira al rey Sebastián, Segovia, 23 de septiembre de 1566; *Cahier van der Essen*, XXXIV/18-19, Miguel de Mendivil a Margarita de Parma, 22 de septiembre de 1566. <<

[380] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, pp. 358-363, y Osorio, *Vida y hazañas*, pp. 331-342, describieron el debate en el Consejo de Estado reunido el 22 de octubre de 1566. <<

[381] La Roca, *Resultas*, 85-7, una consideración ejemplar de la decisión real. <<

[382] HSA Ms B 2010, Alba a «Vuestra Señoría Ilustrísima» (seguramente Espinosa), «Aranjuez, miércoles a las 8 de la noche» (16 de abril de 1567). <<

[383] AA, Caja 5/69, Felipe a Alba, Madrid, 7 de agosto de 1567. <<

[384] Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, p. 81, Alba al obispo de Orihuela, 18 de septiembre de 1567, minuta; *Epistolario*, I, p. 694, Alba a Felipe, 24 de octubre de 1567. <<

[385] *Epistolario*, I, p. 694, apostilla real sobre la carta de Alba a Felipe, 24 de octubre de 1567; Serrano, II, p. 204, Felipe a Pío V, 22 de septiembre de 1567. <<

[386] *CODOIN*, CI, pp. 277-279, Felipe a Chantonnay, 26 de septiembre de 1567. <<

[387] *ADE*, VII, pp. 235-237, parecer de Alba, 11 de abril de 1565. <<

[388] Heredia Herrera, *Catálogo*, I, p. 118, consulta del Consejo

de Indias, y rescripto, 12 de mayo de 1565. Véase Thomas, *Señor del mundo*, cap. 12, sobre la expedición de Menéndez. <<

[389] AGS *Estado*, 16/213-216, «Coniuración del Marqués del Valle y otros cavalleros en las Indias de alçarse con la Nueva España»; AGI *Justicia*, 997 n.º 4, r. 3, proceso de don Gonzalo de Zúñiga como socio de Aguirre, Madrid, 12 de septiembre de 1562; AGI *Patronato* 29 r. 13, «Relación muy verdadera de todo lo sucedido», y r. 18, Juan de Vargas Zapata a Diego de Vargas, Puerto Rico, 1 de agosto de 1562; *CODOIN América*, IV, pp. 191-282, «Relaciones» de la rebelión de Aguirre. Véase también, sobre Aguirre, Thomas, *Señor del mundo*, cap. 16. <<

[390] IANTT, *TSO: CG*, Libro 210/51v-53, Pereira al rey Sebastián, 23 de marzo de 1567; Douais, I, 191, a Carlos IX, 15 de marzo de 1567. <<

[391] AGI *Patronato* 208 r. 4, Instrucción de Felipe II a sus comisionados, copia, mayo de 1567; AGS *Cámara de Castilla, Diversos* 6/50, «Las personas que están pressos en la cárcel real» (s. f., pero situado en torno a 1569). Véase sobre la misteriosa «conjuración del marqués del Valle», Thomas, *Señor del Mundo*, cap. 7. <<

[392] *CODOIN*, CI, pp. 357-358, Felipe a Luis Vanegas de Figueroa, su enviado especial al emperador Maximiliano II, 28 de enero de 1568, minuta. <<

[393] HHStA, *Spanien Hofkorrespondenz* Karton 1 Mappe 3/161 y 4/27 y 129, Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 63, Felipe a Maximiliano, 12 de junio de 1550, 25 de septiembre de 1551, 24 de abril y 17 de julio de 1555. <<

[394] *CODOIN*, CIII, pp. 257 y 251, Felipe a Luis Vanegas, 2 de agosto, y a Vanegas y a Chantonnay, 31 de julio de 1569. <<

[395] *CODOIN*, XXVI, pp. 563-564, Vanegas a Felipe, 30 de septiembre de 1567; *CODOIN*, CX, p. 78, Felipe a Monteagudo, 29 de septiembre de 1570. <<

[396] Galende Díaz y Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, pp. 246-247 y 263-265, María a Felipe, 3 de septiembre y 29 de noviembre de 1573. Los editores transcribieron «vos» en todas las cartas de la emperatriz a su hermano, cuando los documentos dicen «v. al», es decir, «Vuestra Alteza» (para todos los hijos de Carlos V, «Su Majestad» siempre se refería a su padre). <<

[397] *CDCV*, IV, p. 40, Carlos a Felipe, 30 de abril de 1554. <<

[398] Ruiz Gómez, «Princesses and nuns», p. 36 citando a la historia de las Descalzas por Juan Carrillo en 1616. <<

[399] DH, III, pp. 407-408, testimonio de Juana, 26 de octubre de 1562. <<

[400] IANTT *TSO: CG* 210/136-138, Pereira al rey Sebastián, hijo de Juana, 19 y 21 de enero de 1568; González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, p. 412, Juana a Catalina de Médicis, 2 de mayo de 1569. <<

[401] BL *Addl.* 28,354/542, Felipe al marqués de Ladrada, 20 de diciembre de 1572; Sigüenza, *La Fundación*, p. 46, repitiendo la narración de fray Juan de San Jerónimo: *CODOIN*, VII, p. 89. <<

[402] González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, I, pp. 229-37, y III, pp. 515-20, da detalles sobre los entretenimientos de la reina. <<

[403] París, *Négociations*, pp. 807-808, Madame de Vineux a Catalina, 31 de enero de 1562; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 396, relación de Paolo Tiepolo, 19 de enero de 1563. <<

[404] Rodríguez-Salgado, «Una perfecta princesa», II, p. 85, Pereira a Sebastián, 21 de junio y 7 de agosto de 1563. <<

[405] González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, pp. 231-233, St.-Sulpice a Catalina, Monzón, 25 de noviembre de 1563. <<

[406] AGS PR 30/28, testamento ológrafo de Isabel, firmado el 27 de junio de 1566. <<

[407] Douais, I, p. 6, Fourquevaux a Catalina, 3 de noviembre de

1565; González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, II, nota 31, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 26 de agosto de 1566. <<

[408] Douais, I, p. 51, Fourquevaux a Catalina, 4 de febrero de 1566. <<

[409] Cabié, *Ambassade*, 432-433, «Notes diverses», septiembre y octubre de 1566; Douais, I, pp. 110-112 y 117-118, Fourquevaux a Catalina, 18 y 26 de agosto de 1566. <<

[410] González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, pp. 378-90, descripción de la enfermedad y muerte de la reina. <<

[411] *Ibid.,* II, 533 n., Felipe a Catalina de Médicis, 28 de junio de 1569. <<

[412] Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado y Felipe II*, I, pp. 199-202, Pío V a Felipe, 20 de diciembre de 1568, ológrafa. <<

[413] AA, 7/75, Felipe a Alba, 14 de abril de 1569, ológrafa. <<

[414] Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, pp. 99-103, don Diego de Córdoba a Alba, 1 de febrero de 1571. <<

[415] BL *Addl.* 28,354/51-52, Ladrada a Felipe y rescripto, 25 de octubre de 1570. <<

[416] *CODOIN*, XLI, p. 245, Zayas a Arias Montano, 21 de abril de 1571; BL *Addl.* 28,354/230, 240 y 294, Felipe a Ladrada, El Escorial, 10 de junio. 12 de julio y 24 de noviembre de 1571; AA, 44/84, doctor Milio a Juan de Albornoz, Madrid, 4 de diciembre de 1571. <<

[417] AGP, 3/360v-361r, cédulas reales de 12 de julio de 1572. <<

[418] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 721, relación de Alberto Badoero, finales de 1578. <<

[419] BL *Addl.* 28,354/240 y 422, rescripto de Felipe a Ladrada, 10 de julio de 1571 y 12 de julio de 1572. <<

[420] BL *Addl.* 28,354/314, 335-337, 476 y 542, Felipe a Ladrada, 17 y 28 de diciembre de 1571, 26 de septiembre y 20

de diciembre de 1572. <<

[421] BL *Addl.* 28,354/490 y 492, Felipe a Ladrada y rescripto, 2 y 4 de octubre de 1572. <<

[422] BL *Addl.* 28,354/25-26, Espinosa a Ladrada, 11 de abril de 1570; y 394-395, Felipe a Ladrada, 17 de mayo de 1572; BL *Addl.* 28,342/322, Felipe a fray Buenaventura de Santibáñez, 27 de mayo de 1581. Sobre la educación de las infantas, véase Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, «L'educazione devozionale delle Infante». <<

[423] IVdeDJ 51/170 y 21/576, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, Madrid, 20 y 21 de julio de 1575. <<

[424] *El oro y la plata*, p. 663, Felipe a Francisco de Garnica, s. f. (pero 1575); Sigüenza, *La Fundación*, p. 61. <<

[425] IVdeDJ 22D carpeta 30, Niño a Vázquez, 11 de octubre de 1577. <<

[426] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 88, Felipe a las infantas, 30 de julio de 1582. Sobre la actividad epistolaria de Catalina, véase Río Barredo y Sánchez, «Le lettere». <<

[427] *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 85 y 113, Felipe a las infantas, 19 de marzo y 4 de junio de 1582 y Semana Santa de 1584. Sobre los retratos, véase Pérez de Tudela, «Regalos y retratos», 107-112. <<

[428] *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117, Felipe a Catalina, 18 de junio de 1585. <<

[429] *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121 y 157, Felipe a Catalina, 17 de julio de 1585 y 14 de junio de 1588. <<

[430] *Ibid.*, pp. 99 y 109, Felipe a las infantas, 25 de octubre de 1582 y 26 de octubre de 1583. <<

[431] *Ibid.*, pp. 75 y 40-41, Felipe a las infantas, 5 de marzo de 1582 y 1 de mayo de 1581. <<

[432] *Ibid.*, pp. 64 y 94, Felipe a las infantas, 20 de noviembre y 25 de diciembre de 1581 y 1 de octubre de 1582. <<

[433] Grierson, *King of two worlds*, p. 166, Felipe a Granvela. <<

[434] Khevenhüller, *Diario*, p. 286; *CODOIN*, VII, pp. 364, 367 y 370; Sigüenza, pp. 100-101. <<

[435] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 68, 71 y 81-82, cartas a las infantas, 29 de enero, 19 de febrero y 7 de mayo de 1582. Felipe tenía una memoria excelente para las fechas: despidió a su hermana en 1548, cuando él partió de España, y no volvió a verla más que brevemente en 1551, en Zaragoza, y 1556, en Bruselas. <<

[436] Khevenhüller, *Diario*, pp. 286-287. <<

[437] Tormo y Monzó, *En las Descalzas Reales*, pp. 186-187, la archiduquesa Margarita a Felipe, s. f. <<

[438] Khevenhüller, *Diario*, p. 287; Tormo y Monzó, *En las Descalzas Reales*, I, pp. 187-190. <<

[439] Khevenhüller, *Diario*, pp. 287-288. Cuarenta años antes, Carlos V también había temido que el matrimonio de su hijo con una adolescente podía matarle (véase capítulo 1). <<

[440] Khevenhüller, *Diario*, p. 271. <<

[441] Tellechea Idígoras, «La mesa» (2002), pp. 186-187 y 201-202, «Serva Tadea» a Felipe, Roma, 8 de diciembre de 1560, ológrafa. <<

[442] *BMO*, II, p. 378, Felipe a Parma, 19 de octubre de 1586. <<

[443] MacKay, *The baker*, 154, Ana de Austria a Felipe, noviembre de 1594. <<

[444] Gachard, *Don Juan*, pp. 192-193, Granvela a Margarita de Parma, San Lorenzo, 13 de octubre de 1579, y 194-196, Zúñiga a Felipe, Nápoles, 24 de enero de 1580. <<

[445] AHN, *AEESS* 44 exp. 1, conde de Olivares al duque de Sessa, 15 de marzo de 1598. <<

[446] AGS, *CSR* 133/108 (deudas totales), 129 (cédula del mes

de julio de 1559) y 113, «consulta de descargos» y rescripto, 11 de febrero de 1579. <<

[447] AGS, *DGT Inv* 24 903 n.º 1, inventario de los bienes de don Carlos, 9 de febrero de 1568, saldado el 6 de septiembre de 1586; *CODOIN*, XXVIII, pp. 567-569, cédula a Diego de Olarte, 2 de abril de 1577. <<

[448] NA, SP 70/101 fol. 10, Man a William Cecil, San Sebastián, 6 de agosto de 1568. <<

[449] Duke, «William of Orange's *Apology*», p. 28 (publicado por primera vez en Leiden); Anónimo, *Diógenes*, publicado por primera vez en Lieja. Lieder, *The Don Carlos theme*, recoge las diferentes narraciones del destino del príncipe hasta 1930. Al parecer, el *Don Karlos* de Schiller podría haber influido también en el argumento de la película *Star Wars* (George Lucas, 1977); véase High, *Who is this Schiller now?*, pp. 13-14. <<

[450] Mi versión del arresto se basa en IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/136-137, Pereira a Sebastián, 19 de enero de 1568; Gachard, *Don Carlos* (ed. 1863), pp. 689-690, «Avviso d'un Italiano plático y familiar de Ruy Gómez»; *op. cit.*, pp. 674-678, el embajador toscano Nobili al duque de Florencia, 25 de enero de 1568; y pp. 684-687, «Relación histórica» redactada por uno de los ayudas de cámara del príncipe. <<

[451] IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/136-137, Pereira a Sebastián, 19 de enero de 1568; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, p. 395, Tisnacq a Viglius, 31 de enero de 1568. <<

[452] ASL, *OSD*, 251, Giovanbattista Turchi a los Anziani, 22 de enero de 1568; Douais, I, p. 314, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 22 de enero de 1568. <<

[453] Gachard, *Don Carlos* (ed. 1863), p. 677, Nobili al duque de Florencia, 25 de enero de 1568; IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/137-138, Pereira a Sebastián, 21 de enero de 1568. <<

[454] ASMa AG 583/164, Felipe al duque de Mantua, 22 de

enero de 1568; Douais, I, p. 318, Fourquevaux a Catalina de Médicis, 22 de enero de 1568. <<

[455] AGS *Estado* libro 16, fol. 191, Felipe a la reina Catalina, Madrid, 20 de enero de 1568, ológrafa, copia de Juan de Verzosa. IANTT, *Misceláneas Manuscritas* 964/187-188, contiene otra copia con algunas diferencias. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, I, pp. 409-410, publicó esta carta, pero afirmaba erróneamente que fue dirigida a María y Maximiliano con fecha del 21 de enero de 1568. <<

[456] Koch, *Quellen*, Dietrichstein a Maximiliano, 7 de febrero de 1568; ASF, MP 4898/226v-228r, Nobili al duque de Florencia, 13 de abril de 1568. <<

[457] IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/146-150, Pereira a la reina Catalina, 7 de febrero de 1568, y a Sebastián, 16 de febrero de 1568. <<

[458] AGS *Estado* 150/11-12, Felipe a María, minuta profusamente corregida y copia en limpio, 19 de mayo de 1568. <<

[459] Rodríguez Ramos, «Los comienzos», y comunicaciones personales con el autor. <<

[460] AGS, PR 29/35, codicilo firmado por Felipe, Gante, 5 de agosto de 1559. <<

[461] *CODOIN*, XXVII, pp. 207-210, Felipe al corregidor de Gibraltar, 13 de septiembre de 1561. <<

[462] BAV, *VL* 7.008/351, «Proceso de la beatificación y canonización de San Diego de Alcalá», testimonio del doctor Diego López. Agradezco a Andrew Villalon esta referencia. <<

[463] Gachard, *Don Carlos*, p. 110, Tiepolo al dogo, Madrid, 20 de junio de 1562; *CODOIN*, XVIII, p. 557. <<

[464] HSA *Altamira* 13/I/10, Felipe a don García de Toledo, ayo de don Carlos, s. f. (pero verano de 1563). <<

[465] Strohmayer, *Korrespondenz*, I, p. 203, Dietrichstein a Maximiliano, 22 de abril de 1564, la mayor parte cifrada. <<

[466] *Ibid.*, I, p. 231, Dietrichstein a Maximiliano, 29 de junio de 1564. <<

[467] Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología de Felipe II*, p. 106, citando la carta de Felipe a Alba, s. f.; Gachard, *Don Carlos* (ed. 1863), p. 229, n.º 1, Felipe a Chantonnay, su embajador en Viena, 12 de septiembre de 1564. <<

[468] Douais, I, p. 321, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, Madrid, 5 de febrero de 1568, informando de una conversación con Ruy Gómez mantenida el 27 de enero. <<

[469] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, pp. 443-445; Álvarez de Toledo, *Alonso Pérez*, II, p. 279, prior don Antonio a don García de Toledo, «a principios de 1566»; Douais, I, p. 200, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, Madrid, 15 de abril de 1567. <<

[470] Douais, I, p. 220, memoria de Fourquevaux fechada el 30 de junio de 1567; AGS *Estado* 657/39-40, 51 y 64, Chantonnay a Felipe, 17 de abril de 1567 (recibida en Madrid el 16 de mayo); 9 de julio de 1567 (despachada por el rey el 4 de agosto); y 30 de agosto de 1567 (recibida el 10 de noviembre y despachada por Pérez «para ver con su alteza»: el último ejemplo que he encontrado); y BL *Addl.* 28,262/329, Pérez a Felipe, s. f. (pero anterior al 21 de mayo de 1567). <<

[471] Gachard, *Don Carlos* (ed. 1863), pp. 672-673, Cavalli al dogo, Madrid, 11 de febrero de 1568. <<

[472] Douais, I, pp. 165-156, a Carlos IX, 4 de enero de 1567. <<

[473] AGS, *DGT Inv* 24, leg. 903 n.º 1, «Inventario» del 9 de febrero de 1568 (cuentas saldadas el 6 de septiembre de 1568). Sobre los libros alemanes, véase Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, «Lectura y bibliofilia»; sobre las adquisiciones alemanas del príncipe, véase Cervera Vera, «Juan de Herrera». <<

[474] *CODOIN*, XXVII, p. 138, testimonio de Juan de Espinosa. <<

[475] Van der Hammen, *Don Juan*, fols. 39-40, escrita en 1627. <<

[476] *CODOIN*, XXVII, p. 82, «Cuentas fenescidas»; AGS, *DGT Inv* 24, leg. 903 n.º 1, «Cuentas con Antonio Fúcar». <<

[477] ASMa, AG 594, s. fol., Roberti al duque de Mantua, 13 de abril de 1568. <<

[478] Gachard, *Don Carlos* (ed. 1863), pp. 684-686, «Relación histórica»; Van der Hammen, *Don Juan*, 40; y ASMa, AG 594, s. fol., Roberti al duque de Mantua, 3 de marzo de 1568, carta descifrada. <<

[479] Douais, I, p. 322, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 5 de febrero de 1568; IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/137-138, a Sebastián, 21 de enero de 1568. <<

[480] Todas las cartas pertenecientes a AGS, *CC* 387, todas escritas en 1567. <<

[481] González Dávila, *Teatro*, p. 141; Serrano, II, p. 299, Castagna a Alejandrino, 4 de febrero de 1568, cifrado; Gachard, *Don Carlos*, p. 366, citando cartas de Tisnacq y Fourquevaux fechadas el 8 de febrero de 1568. <<

[482] Herrera, *Historia general*, p. 681 (libro I, cap. XV.2). <<

[483] Gachard, *Don Carlos*, p. 387, Felipe a Alba, 6 de abril de 1568, y p. 391, a Maximiliano, 19 de mayo de 1568, carta ológrafa. <<

[484] IANTT, *TSO: CG* 210/155v-156v, Pereira a Catalina, 25 de febrero de 1568. <<

[485] *MHSI Borgia*, IV, p. 649, Lerma a Borja, 1 de octubre de 1568. <<

[486] Douais, I, p. 371, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 21 de julio de 1568. <<

[487] Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II*, p. 423, Felipe a la Universidad de Salamanca, 27 de julio de 1568. <<

[488] Douais, I, p. 371, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 26 de julio de 1568; *MHSI Borgia*, IV, pp. 649-650, Lerma a Borja, 1 de octubre de 1568; Berwick y Alba, *Documentos escogidos*, p. 412, doctor Juan Milio a Alba, 16 de agosto de 1568; *CODOIN*, XCVII, p. 460, Zúñiga a don Rodrigo Manuel, 28 de abril de 1568. Las tres últimas cartas eran privadas, escritas a confidentes íntimos, lo que las hace más creíbles. <<

[489] González de Amezúa, *Isabel*, III, p. 54, Isabel a Fourquevaux, 19 de enero de 1568; Douais, I, p. 319, Fourquevaux a Catalina de Médicis, 22 de enero de 1568. <<

[490] IVdeDJ 38/70, Espinosa a Felipe, con rescripto, s. f. (pero noviembre de 1569). <<

[491] BL *Addl.* 28,704/270v, Espinosa a Alba, 4 de diciembre de 1571, copia; AA, 44/84, el doctor Milio a Juan de Albornoz, secretario de Alba, 4 de diciembre de 1571. La comparación de Lepanto con Moisés y la división de las aguas del mar Rojo («el Vermejo») por parte del cardenal debió de parecer extravagante incluso en 1571. <<

[492] *CODOIN*, XXXVII, p. 84, y IV, pp. 497-506, Alba a Felipe, 6 de enero y 9 de junio de 1568 (esta cita y las que siguen provienen del segundo documento). <<

[493] En su recensión de *FBD*, Juan E. Gelabert lamentó que «Todavía no salgo de mi asombro tras haber leído en más de media docena de lugares la versión "Consejo de Trublas" […] en referencia al "Tribunal de Tumultos" erigido por Alba» («Un gran empeño», p. 9.). El «asombro» del profesor Gelabert continuará al leer este volumen, porque mantengo el nombre empleado por el propio Alba y sus coetáneos españoles: Consejo de Trublas. <<

[494] *CODOIN*, IV, pp. 506-513, Alba a Felipe II, 23 de

noviembre de 1568. <<

[495] AA, 6/12 y 75, Felipe a Alba, 13 de mayo de 1568 y 14 de abril de 1569. <<

[496] *CODOIN*, IV, pp. 521-525, Felipe a Alba, Córdoba, 4 de abril de 1570, minuta, corregida por el rey. <<

[497] *Ibid.*, pp. 533-538, Alba a Felipe, 18 de marzo de 1570, junto con la sentencia de muerte, fechada el 4 de marzo. <<

[498] Gachard, *Études*, p. 85. <<

[499] *CODOIN*, IV, pp. 560-566, Felipe a Alba, 3 de noviembre de 1570. <<

[500] Para este párrafo y los dos siguientes, véanse *CODOIN*, IV, pp. 542-549, instrucción del doctor Velasco al alcalde Arellano, 1 de octubre de 1570; pp. 550-551 y 559-560, Peralta a Felipe, Simancas, 10 y 17 de agosto de 1570; pp. 554-559, fray Hernando del Castillo al doctor Velasco, 16 de octubre de 1570; y pp. 560-566, «Relación de la muerte de Montigni» redactada por Felipe para Alba, 2 de noviembre de 1570, y carta adjunta, 3 de noviembre. <<

[501] AGS *Estado* 542/88, memorial ológrafo de Montigny, Simancas, 15 de octubre de 1570; Gachard, «Floris de Montmorency», pp. 61-62; *CODOIN*, IV, pp. 565-566, Felipe a Alba, 3 de noviembre de 1570. <<

[502] Ramos, «La crisis indiana», p. 11, citando el parecer del doctor Francisco Hernández de Liébana. <<

[503] *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53, citando a Toledo. <<

[504] Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 119, real cédula del 18 de noviembre de 1566. <<

[505] BL *Addl.* 28,354/45-6, Martín de Gaztelu al marqués de Ladrada, Córdoba, 26 de mayo de 1570. <<

[506] Domínguez Ortiz y Vincent, *Historia*, p. 51, Instrucción a Alonso de Carvajal, comisario de Baza. <<

[507] Alcalá-Zamora, «El problema», p. 342. <<

[508] Adams, «The genetic legacy», p. 732. <<

[509] Serrano, III, p. 251, Zúñiga a Felipe, 7 de marzo de 1570. <<

[510] IVdeDJ 21/43, Espinosa a Felipe, con contestación, s. f. (pero enero de 1571). <<

[511] Serrano, IV, p. 445, Felipe a don Juan de Zúñiga, 28 de septiembre de 1571, minuta. <<

[512] Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, p. 767, don Juan a Ruy Gómez, 16 de septiembre de 1571, ológrafo. <<

[513] Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares*, prólogo; García Hernán y García Hernán, *Lepanto*, p. 44 (Doria); Espinosa cit. arriba; Lesure, *Lépante*, pp. 151-152, Consejo de los Diez al almirante Venier, Venecia, 22 de octubre de 1571. <<

[514] Serrano, II, p. 360, Felipe a don Juan de Zúñiga, 8 de marzo de 1568. <<

[515] Serrano, IV, p. 382, Castagna a Rusticucci, 9 de julio de 1571. <<

[516] AA, 7/58, Felipe a Alba, 14 de julio de 1571. <<

[517] BL *Addl.* 28,336/70 y 76, Velasco a Espinosa, 27 de julio y 9 de agosto de 1571. <<

[518] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, II, p. 602; IVdeDJ 67/1, don Luis de Requesens a Andrés Ponce de León, enero de 1574, copia. <<

[519] Galende Díaz y Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, pp. 238-241, María a Felipe, dos cartas del 13 de febrero de 1572, en las que se sustituye el «Vuestra Alteza» por el «vos». <<

[520] Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 1.ª serie, III, p. 362, Orange al conde Juan de Nassau, 20 de febrero de 1570. <<

[521] *CCG*, IV, pp. 594-595 y AGS *Estado* 553/40-42, Felipe a Alba, febrero, minuta (en francés) y 16 de marzo de 1572,

minuta (en español, tres copias). <<

[522] *CCG*, IV, pp. 146-152, Morillon a Granvela, 24 de marzo de 1572. <<

[523] *Ibid.,* p. 176, Morillon a Granvela, 13 de abril de 1572. <<

[524] AGS *Estado* 553/99, Felipe a Alba, 17 de mayo de 1572, minuta comentada por el rey. <<

[525] *CCG*, IV, 428, Morillon a Granvela, 16 de septiembre de 1572; Groen van Prinsterer, *Archives*, 1.ª serie, III, p. 505, y IV, p. CII, Orange a Juan de Nassau, 21 de septiembre de 1572; *DHME*, V, p. 52, *Diurnal* de Gracián, entrada del 7 de septiembre de 1572; Alba a Bossu, 29 de agosto de 1572 (citado en la página 144). <<

[526] *Epistolario*, III, pp. 251 y 261, Alba a Felipe, 28 de noviembre y 19 de diciembre de 1572. <<

[527] BPU, *Ms. Favre* 30/30, Felipe a Requesens, 30 de enero de 1573, copia del original ológrafo. <<

[528] AA, 8/45, Felipe a Alba, 8 de julio de 1573, recibida el 19 de agosto. <<

[529] AGS *Estado* 8340/242, Alba a don Juan de Austria, 18 de septiembre de 1573. <<

[530] BPU, *Ms. Favre* 30/71-74, Felipe a Requesens, 20 de octubre de 1573, copia del original ológrafo. <<

[531] *CODOIN*, CII, pp. 277-306, Instrucciones de Felipe a Requesens, s. f. (pero 21 de octubre de 1573). <<

[532] AGS *Estado* 554/146, Requesens a Felipe, 30 de diciembre de 1573. <<

[533] AGS *Estado* 561/25, «Consulta de negocios de Flandes», Gabriel de Zayas, 24 de febrero de 1574. <<

[534] AGS *Estado* 561/77, Felipe a Requesens, 12 de mayo de 1574, minuta; BRB *Réserve précieuse/Kostbare werken, Ms.* 1678A, Perdón General, firmado el 8 de marzo y promulgado

el 6 de junio de 1574, original. <<

[535] HSA, *Altamira* 3/II-12, Granvela a don Juan de Zúñiga, 6 de diciembre de 1573, copia para Requesens; AGS *Estado* 561/25, voto del conde de Chinchón; *CODOIN*, LXXV, pp. 236-240, Alba a Zayas, 8 de julio de 1573. <<

[536] AGS *Estado* 554/89, Felipe a Alba, 18 de marzo de 1573; Charrière, *Négociations*, III, pp. 413-416, arzobispo de Dax a Carlos IX, 26 de julio de 1573. <<

[537] Gachard, *Don Juan*, pp. 126-128, don Juan a Margarita de Parma, Génova, 4 de mayo de 1574. <<

[538] AA, 33/156, Hernando Delgadillo a Juan de Albornoz, 9 de julio de 1574; AGS *Estado* 559/104, Requesens a Felipe, 12 de diciembre de 1574; HSA, *Altamira*, 3/V/15, Granvela a don Juan de Zúñiga, 23 de septiembre de 1574. <<

[539] AA 28/3, Alonso de Laloo a Juan de Albornoz, 9 de octubre de 1574. <<

[540] AGS *Estado* 560/74 y 91, Requesens a Felipe, 16 de septiembre de 1574, y Francisco de Valdés a Requesens, 18 de septiembre de 1574. <<

[541] AGS *Estado* 561/122, Felipe a Requesens, 22 de octubre de 1574, minuta, con correcciones ológrafas. <<

[542] AGS *Estado* 560/8, Requesens a Felipe, 6 de noviembre de 1574; Pi Corrales, *España y las potencias nórdicas*, pp. 89, 103, 181-184 y 191-196. <<

[543] IVdeDJ 53/3/64, Felipe a Vázquez, 17 de mayo de 1574 (el pesimismo de Menéndez); Pi Corrales, *España*, 214-217, Menéndez a Pedro Menéndez Márquez, 8 de septiembre de 1574. <<

[544] AA, 131/167, Felipe a Covarrubias, ológrafo, s. f. (pero 18 de junio de 1573); IVdeDJ 21/233, «Para las juntas de los presidentes», 19 de junio de 1573, borrador de Vázquez de la

propuesta de Felipe; IVdeDJ 76/530 y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 131, minutas de la Junta de Presidentes, 24 de junio de 1573. <<

[545] Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, pp. 168-169, Felipe a Covarrubias, 4 y 23 de enero de 1574. <<

[546] IVdeDJ 76/491-503 y 507-509, relación de Ovando a Felipe, 11 de abril de 1574. <<

[547] BL *Eg.* 1506/18-19, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 16 de marzo de 1574. <<

[548] IVdeDJ 53/3/56, 51/30, 53/3/43 y 51/31, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 13, 15, 24 y 31 de mayo de 1574, y respuesta regia. Véase capítulo 5 sobre otras afirmaciones desesperadas similares realizadas durante esas semanas. <<

[549] IVdeDJ 51/33, 53/3/87 y 53/3/77, Felipe a Vázquez, 20 de junio, 4 de julio y 18 de julio de 1574. <<

[550] BZ 144/34, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 10 de diciembre de 1574. <<

[551] Gachard, *Don Juan*, pp. 128-130, don Juan a Margarita de Parma, Trapani, 3 de octubre de 1574. <<

[552] IVdeDJ 38/69, Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 19 de enero de 1575. <<

[553] IVdeDJ 24/103, Ovando a Felipe, 25 de marzo de 1575. <<

[554] Gachard, *Don Juan*, p. 131, don Juan a Margarita, 19 de junio de 1575; IVdeDJ 44/119, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 10 de mayo de 1575. <<

[555] IVdeDJ 67/271 y 106, Requesens al conde de Monteagudo, 6 de marzo de 1575, y a don Juan de Zúñiga, 9 de julio de 1575. <<

[556] BZ 144/61, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 31 de mayo de 1575. <<

[557] Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, pp. 154-155, Felipe a don Juan de Idiáquez, 8 de septiembre de 1575; e *idem*, p. 191, a todos los corregidores y jueces de Castilla. <<

[558] *Ibid.,* p. 193, Martín de Gaztelu a don Juan de Zúñiga, 9 de noviembre de 1575; HSA *Altamira* 7/III-29, Domingo de Zavala a Felipe, Madrid, 17 de noviembre de 1575, copia para Requesens; IVdeDJ 37/72, Requesens a Zúñiga, 12 de noviembre de 1575. <<

[559] IVdeDJ 60/138-143, Antonio Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, 23 de marzo de 1576. <<

[560] Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 264, Juan Fernández de Espinosa a Felipe, 1577; IVdeDJ 53/5/35, Felipe a Vázquez, 22 de febrero de 1576. <<

[561] AGS *Estado* 489, s. fol., «Lo que se platicó y paresçió en consejo destado a IX de mayo 1578» con comentario de Felipe; GCP, IV, pp. 426-427, notas de Felipe para su entrevista con don Juan de Austria, octubre de 1576; AGS *Estado* 556/5, Alba a Felipe, 8 de enero de 1573. <<

[562] Riba, pp. 25-26, Vázquez a Felipe, 21 de marzo de 1576. <<

[563] Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, p. 6; González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, p. 7. <<

[564] BL *Addl.* 28,262/568-570, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero julio de 1573). <<

[565] Marañón, *Los procesos*, p. 56, testimonio de Jerónimo Díaz, 11 de agosto de 1585; AGS *Estado* 1134/123, don Juan a Pérez, Mesina, 11 de noviembre de 1571; TMLM, *Ms.* 129960, consulta de Pérez a Felipe, 30 de noviembre de 1574. <<

[566] IVdeDJ 24/99, Juan de Ovando a Mateo Vázquez, 24 de junio de 1575; IVdeDJ 38/62-75 (una sola carpeta s. fol.),

Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 25 de junio de 1575; Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y diplomacia*, pp. 1002-1003, Felipe a Juan Andrea Doria, 29 de julio de 1575. <<

[567] AGS *Estado* 570/133, Felipe a don Juan, 8 de abril 1576, minuta corregida; *idem*, fols. 140 y 150, Pérez a Escobedo, 8 de abril 1576, minutas corregidas por el rey. <<

[568] AGS *Estado* 570/149, Pérez a Escobedo, 8 de abril de 1576, borrador. <<

[569] IVdeDJ 60/225-226 Pérez a Felipe, s. f. (pero mayo o junio de 1576); y 36/38, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, 16 de junio de 1576. <<

[570] BL *Addl.* 28,262/207, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, El Escorial, 1 de julio de 1576. <<

[571] ASF, MP 2860/115-116, avisos de Génova, 10 y 15 de junio de 1576; y MP 3254/297-314, avisos de Milán, 12-29 de julio de 1576. <<

[572] Todas las citas proceden de *CODOIN*, XV, pp. 547-553, Pérez a Escobedo, 16 de abril de 1576. <<

[573] AGRB, *Collectie Gachard* 666/187, don Juan al duque de Urbino, Milán, 8 de agosto de 1576, copia. <<

[574] Belda, «Carta», p. 475, Zúñiga a Felipe, 3 de diciembre de 1578. <<

[575] GCP, IV, pp. 346-7, patente para don Juan y cartas para los consejos y Estados de los Países Bajos, todos 1 de septiembre de 1576; NA SP 70/139/123, Felipe a Isabel Tudor, la misma fecha. <<

[576] GCP, IV, pp. 321-322, don Juan a Felipe, la raya de Barcelona, 22 de agosto de 1576, y la dura respuesta de este, s. f. (pero 29 de agosto). <<

[577] BL *Eg.* 1506/38-42 y 44-45, Quiroga a Felipe, 24 de agosto (con rescripto del 29) y 31 de agosto de 1576 (con rescripto del

día siguiente). <<

[578] Gachard, *Don Juan*, p. 92, Margarita a don Juan, 22 de agosto de 1576. <<

[579] BL *Addl.* 28,263/62-63 y 53, Felipe II a Vázquez, 27 de octubre y 19 de septiembre de 1576. <<

[580] BL *Eg.* 1506/42 y 46-47v, Quiroga a Felipe, 29 y 30 de septiembre de 1576, con rescriptos. <<

[581] GCP, IV, pp. 426-427, dos juegos de notas, s. f. (pero octubre de 1576), copia del original ológrafo. <<

[582] Porreño, *Historia*, pp. 427-428, don Juan a Felipe, Irún, 24 de octubre de 1576, ológrafo. <<

[583] Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, IX, pp. 15-21, Instrucciones de Felipe a don Juan, 11 de noviembre de 1576, borrador: *GCP*, V, pp. 27-28, Felipe a don Juan, 11 de noviembre de 1576. <<

[584] *CODOIN*, L, 298-299 y 303-304, Escobedo a Felipe, St.-Dié en Lorena, 28 de noviembre de 1576, y Luxemburgo, 8 de diciembre de 1576. <<

[585] AGRB *Collectie Gachard*, 666/297, don Juan a Emanuel Filiberto, Bastogne, 19 de diciembre de 1576, copia. <<

[586] BL *Eg.* 1506/42 y 50, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 29 de septiembre y 3 de octubre de 1576. <<

[587] Luna, *Comentarios*, p. 35. <<

[588] AHN *Inq* libro 284/94 (fol. moderna 103), Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 18 de marzo de 1578; AGS *Estado* 569/150bis, don Juan a Felipe, 21 de noviembre de 1576, con un rescripto real escrito, por supuesto, al menos dos semanas más tarde. <<

[589] AGS *Estado* 569/133-134, don Juan a Felipe, 6 de diciembre de 1576, «Vista por los Dos»; ASF, MP 4910/178, Luigi Dovara al gran duque de Toscana, 25 de febrero de 1579.

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[590] BL *Addl.* 28,262/599-601, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero probablemente abril de 1577); Morel-Fatio, *L'Espagne*, p. 111, don Juan a don Rodrigo de Mendoza, 9 de diciembre de 1576. <<

[591] Gachard, *Don Juan*, p. 74, don Juan a Margarita de Parma, 8 de noviembre de 1573; Fórmica, *Doña María*, p. 19, Octavio Gonzaga a Pérez, 20 de octubre de 1578. <<

[592] BL *Addl.* 28,262/219-221 y 225-226, Pérez a Felipe, 1 de enero y 8 febrero de 1577. <<

[593] Porreño, *Historia*, p. 454, don Juan a Felipe, 22 de diciembre de 1576; *CODOIN*, L, pp. 300-301, Escobedo a Felipe, 10 de enero de 1577. <<

[594] AGS *Estado* 2843/3, Felipe a don Juan, 31 de enero de 1577. <<

[595] BL *Addl.* 28,262/236-237v, Pérez a Felipe II y rescripto, 12 de febrero de 1577. <<

[596] BL *Addl.* 28,262/236-237 v, *ut supra*. <<

[597] AGS *Estado* 570/65, Felipe a don Juan, 12 de febrero de 1577. <<

[598] Gachard, *Don Juan*, pp. 140-142, don Juan a Margarita de Parma, Marche, 17 de febrero de 1577. <<

[599] Voci, «L'impresa», p. 381, Como a don Juan, 2 de abril de 1577; y p. 423, Como a Ormanetto, 12 de abril de 1577. <<

[600] *Ibid*., pp. 424-425, Ormanetto a Como, 26 de abril de 1577. <<

[601] BL *Addl.* 28,262/256-257, Felipe a Pérez, 4 de abril de 1577; Voci, «L'impresa», pp. 424-425, Ormanetto a Como, 26 de abril de 1577. <<

[602] BL, *Add.* 28,262/243-244 y 250-253, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, 28 y 29 de marzo de 1577, cursiva añadida; *GCP*, V,

pp. 282-288, Felipe a don Juan, 6 de abril de 1577. <<

[603] Griffiths, *Representative government*, p. 460, «Vraye narration des propos», 13-23 de mayo de 1577. <<

[604] Porreño, *Historia*, pp. 477-480, don Juan a Felipe, 26 de mayo de 1577. ARA *Staten Generaal* 11,915 contiene numerosas transcripciones de las cartas sobre Inglaterra de Escobedo y don Juan en 1577, que fueron interceptadas y descifradas. Véase también BL *Cott. Cal.* C. v/97v-98, Escobedo a Felipe, 9 de abril de 1577, original cifrado más la copia descifrada y su traducción inglesa. <<

[605] BPU, *Favre* 28/185-187, Felipe a Sessa, 28 de agosto de 1577 (dos cartas, ambas originales); AGS *Estado* 1247/133, Felipe al marqués de Ayamonte, 28 de agosto de 1577, minuta; AGS *Estado* 571/56, Felipe a don Juan, minuta redactada por Zayas en Madrid el 27 de agosto (véase fol. 53) aprobada por Felipe el día siguiente, y fechada el 1 de septiembre de 1577. <<

[606] BL *Eg.* 1506/207-209, Quiroga a Felipe, «jueves» (12 de septiembre de 1577), con detalles sobre la reunión del consejo el día antes; AGS *Estado* 2843/1, «Parecer de los V del Consejo de Estado», 11 de septiembre de 1577, ambos con rescripto real. <<

[607] BPU, *Favre* 28/195-196, Felipe a Sessa; AGS *Estado* 571/88, Felipe a don Juan, y HSA *Altamira* 1/1/46, Diego de Covarrubias a Felipe, con rescripto, todos fechados el 11 de septiembre de 1577. <<

[608] IVdeDJ 36/21, don Juan a Zúñiga, 30 de septiembre de 1577. <<

[609] González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, pp. 77-79, Pérez a doña Juana Coello, 23 de febrero de 1590. Mignet, *Antonio Pérez*, pp. 280-285, negaba explícitamente que en 1577 don Juan estableciera contacto con Guisa; pero AGRB, *Audience* 1685/3, 1686/1, y 1779/2, presenta una abundante correspondencia

entre ambos sobre el suministro de alimento y tropas durante los últimos meses de 1577. <<

[610] AGS *Estado* 572/142, don Juan a Felipe, 20 de noviembre de 1577; AHN *Inq* libro 284/83 (fol. moderna 87), Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 1 de octubre de 1577. <<

[611] BNF *Ms. Esp*. 132/11, Felipe a Juan de Vargas Mexía, 24 de enero de 1578. <<

[612] Marañón, *Los procesos*, p. 186, testimonio de don Pedro de Mendoza, 25 de septiembre de 1589; ASVe *SDS*, 11/65, Badoer al dogo, 3 de abril de 1578; Valente, *Un dramma*, 55, Juan de Samaniego al príncipe de Parma, 4 de abril de 1578; ASMo *CD Ambasciatori Spagna* 11, 1578, n.º IX, Orazio Maleguzzi al duque de Ferrara, 4 de abril de 1578. En sus despachos, todos los embajadores italianos emplean «la hora italiana», en la que el ciclo circadiano empieza media hora después de la puesta del sol; por tanto, cuando afirmaban que el asesinato de Escobedo ocurrió «*a un' hora di notte*», querían decir una hora y media después del ocaso, que, en marzo, en Madrid, significaba hacia las nueve de la noche. <<

[613] IVdeDJ 51/161, Felipe a Vázquez, El Escorial, 1 de abril de 1578 (véase también Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 12); ASF, MP 4910/57, Baccio Orlandini al gran duque de Toscana, 2 de abril de 1578. <<

[614] ASMo, *CD AS* 11, 1578, n.º XI, Maleguzzi al duque de Ferrara, 12 de abril de 1578, minuta. <<

[615] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 23, 201-202 y 207, auto dictado por Antonio Márquez, secretario del tribunal, 29 de diciembre de 1589, y «Traslado del papel de Su Magestad que está escrito de su real mano», 4 de enero de 1590. <<

[616] *Ibid*., pp. 217-218, «Diligençia en el tormento con el secretario Antonio Pérez», 23 de febrero de 1590; KB, La Haya, *Ms.* 128.b.3/12v-16, Escobedo a Pérez, 7 de febrero de

1577, copia presentada por Pérez al justicia mayor de Aragón. <<

[617] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 217-218, «Diligençia en el tormento», 23 de febrero de 1590. Horas más tarde, en una carta a su esposa, Pérez ofreció otra versión muy similar de su historia: González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, pp. 77-79, Pérez a doña Juana Coello, 23 de febrero de 1590. <<

[618] HSA Ms B 1252/4, Alba a Zayas, s. f. (pero 11 o 12 de septiembre de 1577). <<

[619] Respecto a la orden de capturar a Orange vivo o muerto, véase capítulo 15; para Pérez, véase capítulo 19. Para otros ejemplos de ejecuciones extrajudiciales, véase capítulo 16. <<

[620] Marañón, *Los procesos*, p. 220, «Declaración de Diego Martínez», 24 de febrero de 1590 (nótese que la transcripción dice «año de 587» en lugar de «578»). <<

[621] *Ibid.*, p. 220, «Declaración de Diego Martínez», pp. 116-121, «Declaración de Antonio Enríquez», 30 de junio de 1585, y p. 97, pregunta adicional a Enríquez el 1 de febrero de 1590. <<

[622] *Ibid.,* pp. 121-122 (Enríquez), 221 (Martínez) y 65, «Declaración de Martín Gutiérrez», 20 de diciembre de 1585. <<

[623] Pérez, *Relaciones y cartas*, I, pp. 272-273, «Memorial que Antonio Pérez presentó». <<

[624] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 161-168, Pérez a Felipe, 3, 16 y 23 de febrero y 17 y 26 de marzo de 1589. <<

[625] *Ibid.*, p. 46, testimonio de Castro, Lisboa, 5 de junio de 1582. <<

[626] ASF, MP 4910/177-178, Dovara al gran duque, 25 de febrero de 1579. <<

[627] AGS *Estado* 574/66 y 79, don Juan a Felipe, 17 de febrero

de 1577, ológrafas; BL *Addl.* 28,262/263-264, 266-269 y 546, Pérez a Felipe, 5 y 6 de abril de 1577 y s. f. (pero julio de 1577); AHN *Inq* libro 284/83 [fol. moderna 87], Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 1 de octubre de 1577. <<

[628] Ungerer, «La defensa», p. 120; Marañón, *Los procesos*, p. 227, «Declaración del Licenciado Bartolomé de la Hera», 2 de marzo de 1590; y p. 172, «Declaración de doña Beatriz de Frías», 18 de septiembre de 1589. Dadson y Reed, *Epistolario*, pp. 77-84, 161, 210-211, 217-218, 233-234, 234-239 (la carta más extensa de la princesa que se conserva), 241-242, 269-270, 271-273 y 278-279 reproducen todas las cartas y comisiones de Ana a Escobedo, a partir de 1558, que se conocen. <<

[629] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 251-252, «Declaración» de Favara, 22 de octubre de 1590. <<

[630] *Ibid.*, pp. 215 y 217, «Diligençia en el tormento con el secretario Antonio Pérez», 23 de febrero de 1590. <<

[631] AGS *Estado* 570/139, Pérez a Escobedo, abril de 1576, minuta. <<

[632] BNF *Ms Esp* 132/179-80 y 66, Pérez a Vargas Mexía, 26 de enero de 1579 y 15 de junio de 1578. <<

[633] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, p. 1392, citando un comentario realizado por Quiroga en 1590. <<

[634] Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología*, pp. 37-38, Pérez a Andrés de Prada, 15 de octubre de 1578. <<

[635] Dadson and Reed, *Epistolario*, pp. 403-404, orden de Ana en la que nombra a Antonio Enríquez «mi criado» como su «contador», 20 de marzo de 1581, antedatada el 4 de junio de 1580 «porque fue entonces cuando comenzó a servirme», y 530-531, un aumento de salario a partir del 1 de enero de 1583; BZ 142/7 bis, Vázquez a Felipe II y rescripto, 28 de julio de 1578 (impreso con algunas variantes en Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 165). <<

[636] Riba, pp. 177-178, Vázquez a Felipe, 24 de mayo de 1578. <<

[637] Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 14, Pedro Núñez a Vázquez, 26 de diciembre de 1578; y 17, el doctor Milio a Vázquez, 6 de enero de 1579, ambas referidas al resentimiento de Ana. <<

[638] BZ 144/224, Felipe a Vázquez, 15 de noviembre de 1578. Vázquez escribió «Escovedo» en el verso. <<

[639] IVdeDJ 51/181, Vázquez a Felipe, San Lorenzo, 28 de diciembre de 1578. <<

[640] IVdeDJ 44/57-58, Vázquez a Felipe, 11 y 15 de abril de 1574, y rescriptos. <<

[641] Martínez Hernández, «El desafío», descubrió y publicó estas cartas de amor, s. f. (pero 1566). <<

[642] *CODOIN*, VIII, pp. 487-488, cédula de Alba a don Fadrique, Madrid, 2 de octubre de 1578. <<

[643] Riba, pp. 192-193, Vázquez a Felipe, 30 de noviembre de 1578. <<

[644] HSA, *Altamira* 1/I/101, Antonio Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, 2 de enero de 1579. <<

[645] *CODOIN,* VIII, pp. 509-511, Pazos a Felipe y rescripto, 6 de julio de 1579; Martínez Hernández, «El desafío», e *idem, El marqués de Velada*, pp. 163-178. <<

[646] Valente, *Un dramma*, p. 53, Bologna al cardenal Farnesio, 4 de agosto de 1579; *CODOIN*, LVI, p. 111, Vázquez a Pérez, s. f. (pero enero de 1579); Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 18, Vázquez al doctor Milio, enero de 1579 (Milio y el embajador imperial Khevenhüller actuaron de mediadores entre los secretarios) <<

[647] Muro, *Vida,* apéndice 30, Pazos a Felipe y rescripto, 7 de marzo de 1579 (un documento extraordinario). Esta parece ser la primera vez que Felipe se refirió al asunto de Pérez como algo que afectaba a su «conciencia». Los «días de recogimiento» a los

que el rey se refería eran los días de ayuno y abstinencia de la Cuaresma, que cayeron en el 11, 13 y 14 de marzo de 1579. <<

[648] Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 31, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 16 de marzo de 1579; ASF, MP 4910/216, Dovara al gran duque de Toscana, 25 de marzo de 1579; AST, *LM*, 2, s. fol., Carlo Pallavicini al duque de Saboya, 29 de marzo de 1579. <<

[649] *CCG,* VII, pp. 352-353, y Mignet, *Antonio Pérez*, p. 104, Felipe a Granvela, 30 de marzo de 1579; ASG, AS 2416, s. fol., Passano al dogo, 6 de junio de 1579. <<

[650] Sigüenza, 92-93. <<

[651] ASV NS 22/170, Sega al secretario de Estado, 11 de mayo de 1579, informando de su audiencia; BL *Addl.* 28,263/225-226, Vázquez a Felipe con rescripto, 21 de junio de 1579. <<

[652] BZ 143/207-208, Vázquez a Felipe, San Lorenzo, 24 de junio de 1579. <<

[653] Muro, *Vida,* apéndice 47, Instrucciones de Vázquez al conde de Barajas, 9 de julio de 1579. <<

[654] Aunque el único texto conocido de este billete de la princesa, s. f., lo publicó Pérez, *Relaciones*, I, pp. 113-115, muchos embajadores confirmaron sus términos generales: Valente, *Un dramma*, p. 53, Samaniego a Parma, 1 de agosto de 1579; ASMo, *CD AS* 11, 1579, n.º XXIII, Malaguzzi a Ferrara, 4 de agosto de 1579; etcétera. Por tanto, lo acepto como verdadero, al igual que hacen Dadson y Reed, *Epistolario*, pp. 381-383. <<

[655] BZ 162/6 bis, Felipe al duque del Infantado, 29 de julio de 1579; *CCG*, VII, p. 443, Granvela a Margarita de Parma, 12 de septiembre de 1579. <<

[656] BZ 143/212, Vázquez a Felipe, 26 de julio de 1579. <<

[657] BZ 143/212, rescripto de Felipe a Vázquez, 26 de julio de 1579; Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, p. 445, citando a Jerónimo

Zurita; BZ 143/211, Vázquez a Felipe con rescripto, 26-27 de julio de 1579. <<

[658] *CODOIN*, LVI, pp. 212-214, Felipe a Pazos, s. f. (pero 28 de julio de 1579), y respuesta. <<

[659] Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 53, Pedro Núñez a Vázquez, 1 de agosto de 1579; Valente, *Un dramma*, p. 53, Bologna al cardenal Farnesio, 4 de agosto de 1579. <<

[660] ASVe *SDS*, 12/42, Morosini al dogo, 29 de julio de 1579. <<

[661] ASMo, *CD AS* 11, 1579 n.º XXII, Maleguzzi al duque de Ferrara, 29 de agosto de 1579. <<

[662] BL *Addl.* 28,262/632-635v, Pérez a Felipe, 13 de agosto de 1578, y rescripto; Sigüenza, p. 86; *CODOIN*, VII, p. 229. <<

[663] AGS *Estado* 489, s. fol., «Lo que se platicó y paresçió en consejo de [E]stado a IX de mayo 1578». <<

[664] ASVe, *SDS* 11/51, Alberto Badoer al dogo, 6 de enero de 1578, citando una carta «di pugno di Sua Maiestà»; AGS *Estado* 395/197, Felipe a Silva, 31 de mayo de 1578, copia; *CODOIN*, XL, pp. 83-84 y 87-88, Silva a Felipe, 27 de julio y 4 de octubre de 1578. <<

[665] HSA, Altamira 1/I/24, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta; AGS, GA 88/244, Felipe a Juan Delgado; y BL *Addl.* 28,262/285-286, Felipe a Pérez, todos fechados el 13 de agosto de 1578. <<

[666] BL *Addl.* 28,262/632-635, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 13 de agosto de 1578); Sigüenza, 86-87. <<

[667] BL *Addl. Ms* 28,262/632-635v, Pérez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 13 de agosto de 1578). <<

[668] *CODOIN*, XL, pp. 137-138, 160 y 169-170, Moura a Felipe, Lisboa, 26 de agosto, 25 de septiembre y 23 de octubre de 1578. <<

[669] Fernández Conti, «La Junta Militar», p. 292 n.º 24,

Delgado a Felipe, 26 de octubre de 1578, con rescripto; AGS, GA 88/317, 362 y 353, Delgado a Felipe, 30 de octubre y 1 y 13 de diciembre de 1578, cada uno con rescripto. <<

[670] *CODOIN*, XL, pp. 143 y 196, Moura a Felipe, 26 de agosto y 25 de noviembre de 1578; Fernández Collado, *Gregorio XIII,* pp. 53-54, citando un relato del nuncio Sega. <<

[671] AGS, GA 89/196, Delgado a Felipe, s. f. (pero julio o agosto de 1579), con rescripto; ASF, DU I/185/19, Bernardo Maschi al duque de Urbino, 10 de enero de 1580. <<

[672] BSLE, Ms &.III.12, Lorenzo de San Pedro, *Diálogo llamado Philippino*, fol. 5v; *CODOIN*, XL, p. 198, Moura a Felipe, Lisboa, 25 de noviembre de 1578. <<

[673] *CODOIN*, VI, pp. 30-32, Moura a Felipe, 29 de noviembre de 1578; y pp. 78 y 350, Felipe a Moura, 26 de enero y 14 de abril de 1579. <<

[674] *Ibid*., p. 661, Felipe al duque de Osuna, enviado especial ante Dom Enrique, 24 de agosto de 1579. <<

[675] AGS, GA 94/28, Felipe a Delgado, 30 de enero de 1580. <<

[676] ASVe, *SDS* 12/74, Morosini al dogo, 8 de febrero de 1580; Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 181, Felipe a don Juan de Zúñiga, 13 de febrero de 1580. <<

[677] Suárez Inclán, *Guerra*, p. 222, Moura a Felipe, 4 de junio de 1580; ASVe, *SDS* 12/74, Morosini al dogo, 8 de febrero de 1580; Kamen, *Felipe*, p. 181, Felipe a don Juan de Zúñiga, 13 de febrero de 1580; *CODOIN*, VIII, pp. 516-519, Pazos a Felipe, 15 de febrero de 1580. <<

[678] Suárez Inclán, *Guerra*, pp. 96-97 y notas, Felipe a Moura, 16 de febrero de 1580, con billete adjunto de Delgado. <<

[679] Porreño, *Dichos y hechos*, p. 29. <<

[680] Thompson, «La última jornada», p. 90. <<

[681] *CODOIN*, XXXV, pp. 61-62, Felipe a Alba, Badajoz, 5 de agosto de 1580, ológrafo. <<

[682] *CODOIN*, XXXII, pp. 482 y 489, Alba a Felipe, 28 y 30 de agosto de 1580. <<

[683] *CODOIN*, XXXIII, p. 234, apostilla de Felipe en una carta de Arceo a Zayas, 4 de noviembre de 1580. <<

[684] Velázquez, *La entrada*, fol. 69. <<

[685] IVdeDJ 56, carpeta 21, Vázquez a Hernando de Vega, 17 de abril de 1581; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 35, Felipe a sus hijas, 3 de abril de 1581. <<

[686] BL *Addl.* 28,357/498, cédula de agosto de 1581; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 89 n.º 192, carta de Gaspar de los Arcos, Tomar, 20 de marzo de 1581. <<

[687] Rodríguez-Salgado, *Felipe II*, p. 171, don Juan de Zúñiga a Felipe, 19 de julio de 1581; AGS *Estado* 939/128 y 143, Felipe a Zúñiga, Lisboa, 8 y 23 de octubre de 1581. <<

[688] Freitas de Meneses, *Os Açores*, I, pp. 82-84, Figueroa a Felipe, 3 de agosto de 1582. <<

[689] Muro, *Vida*, apéndices 66 y 73, Hernando de Vega a Vázquez, 25 de agosto y 17 de septiembre de 1579; *ibid.*, apéndice 64, Pedro Núñez a Vázquez, 25 de agosto de 1579; Pérez, *Relaciones*, I, p. 122. <<

[690] Muro, *Vida*, apéndices 104 y 116, Pazos a Felipe, 19 de diciembre de 1580 y 17 de abril de 1581, con rescriptos. <<

[691] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 46-51, declaraciones de don Rodrigo de Castro, don Fernando de Solís y don Luis Enríquez, Lisboa, 5 y 9 de junio de 1582; *CODOIN*, LVI, pp. 397-406, Pazos a Felipe, 4 y 18 de noviembre de 1581, con rescriptos; HSA, *Altamira* 1/I/6, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 7 de septiembre de 1581. <<

[692] Riba, p. 217, Felipe a Sancho Bustos de Villegas, 12 de

febrero de 1580, ológrafo; Bratli, *Philippe II*, p. 235, Felipe al licenciado Salazar, 8 de junio de 1581, también ológrafo. <<

[693] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 35-37, testimonio de «Luis de Overa» (es decir, Luigi Dovara), Lisboa, 30 de mayo de 1582; Muro, *Vida*, pp. 196-198, Felipe a Rodrigo Vázquez, 27 de agosto de 1582, borrador. <<

[694] *CODOIN*, LVI, pp. 419-120, Pazos a Felipe, 8 de septiembre de 1582, con rescripto; Muro, *Vida*, pp. 196-200, Felipe a la princesa de Éboli, 8 de noviembre de 1582. <<

[695] HSA, *Altamira* 1/I/6, folios 189 y 191, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 7 de septiembre de 1582; Fernández Duro, *Conquista de las Azores*, pp. 396-399, Instrucción a Santa Cruz, 6 de junio de 1582. <<

[696] IVdeDJ 51/105, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 22 de agosto de 1583. <<

[697] ASMa AG 598, s. f., Lepido Agnello al duque de Mantua, Madrid, 6 de junio de 1579; Bouza Álvarez, *Imagen y propaganda*, 85-86 (cursiva añadida). <<

[698] Keeler, *Sir Francis Drake's West Indian Voyage*, pp. 245-246 y 315, «A summarie and true discourse of Sir Francis Drake's West Indian Voyage» (1589). <<

[699] ASC 48/3, Santa Cruz a Felipe, Angra, 9 de agosto de 1583, borrador, y Felipe a Santa Cruz, 23 de septiembre de 1583. <<

[700] NMM, *Ms PH* 1B/435, Olivares a Zúñiga, 24 de septiembre de 1583, descifrado, con apostilla real ológrafa. <<

[701] Benítez Sánchez-Blanco, «De moriscos, papeles y archivos», pp. 116-117, don Juan de Idiáquez relata las deliberaciones de una junta para solucionar el «problema de los moriscos» en 1581-1583. <<

[702] Sande, *De missione,* p. 208. <<

[703] IVdeDJ 76/161-162, Vega a Felipe y rescripto, 24 de marzo de 1582, copia. <<

[704] IVdeDJ 68/306 y 286, Vega a Felipe y rescripto, 8 de junio y 22 de agosto de 1583. <<

[705] *CCG*, XI, pp. 58-59, 64, 70-71 y 132-133, Granvela a Felipe, 3 de agosto, a Idiáquez, 4 de agosto, e Idiáquez a Granvela, 7 y 23 de agosto de 1584; HSA *Altamira* 5/V/3, Vázquez a Felipe, con respuesta, 3 de agosto de 1584. <<

[706] NA, SP 12/179 fol. 36-38, interrogatorio a Pedro de Villareal, 13 de junio de 1585 (estilo anglicano); y SP 12/180/59A, carta interceptada de Juan del Hoyo, 5 de julio de 1585 (estilo gregoriano). <<

[707] Salazar, *Política española*, p. 24; González Dávila, *Teatro*, p. 1; Feltham, *A brief character*, pp. 84-85; Camden, *Historie,* libro IV, p. 131. <<

[708] Bratli, *Philippe II*, p. 222, «Relación» de Felipe de Caverel, Lisboa, 1582; Longlée, 48, a Enrique III, 20 de junio de 1584; *CCG*, X, pp. 126-127, Granvela al prior de Bellefontaine, Madrid, 3 de abril de 1583. <<

[709] Sánchez Cantón, *Inventarios reales*, II, pp. 41, 77, 115-121, 145, etcétera; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 57 y 88-89, Felipe a las infantas, 2 de octubre de 1581 y 30 de julio de 1582. <<

[710] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, pp. 402-404; AGP 237, *Inventarios reales*, 3/278r-279v, «Las dibersas pieças de plata para servicio de la barbería». <<

[711] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 53-4 y 103, Felipe a las infantas, 21 de agosto de 1581 y 14 de febrero de 1583; BZ 143/46 y 50, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 16 y 20 de marzo de 1588. <<

[712] IVdeDJ 53/5/35, HSA *Altamira* 1/I/19, HSA Ms B 228, y BL *Addl.* 28,700/151 y 155, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 22 de febrero de 1576, 17 de diciembre de 1584, 13 de enero y 7

y 9 de febrero de 1587. Véanse más ejemplos en *FBD*, pp. 759-762. <<

[713] BL *Addl.* 28,357/13, Felipe a Alba, 28 de julio de 1573; IVdeDJ 55/IX/217, Vázquez a Felipe y respuestas, 17 de octubre de 1588. <<

[714] *DHME*, V, *Diurnal* de Gracián, p. 111, 8 de julio de 1573; AHN *Inq* libro 100/551, Juan Ruiz de Velasco a Mateo Vázquez, 23 de agosto de 1588; HSA *Altamira* 1/II-53, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 4 de julio de 1584. <<

[715] BL *Addl.* 28,354/490, marqués de Ladrada a Felipe, y respuesta, 2 de octubre de 1572. <<

[716] BL *Addl.* 28,354/479-480, 490, 506 y 542, Ladrada a Felipe, con rescriptos, 27 de septiembre y 2 y 16 de octubre de 1572; IVdeDJ 7/95, Vázquez a Felipe, con respuesta, 24 de septiembre de 1590. Clouse, *Medicine*, demuestra que Felipe mostró un interés activo en regular todas las ramas de la profesión médica en España. <<

[717] Bratli, *Philippe II*, p. 222, «Relación» de Caverel; BZ 142/67, Felipe a Vázquez, 3 de febrero de 1584. <<

[718] HSA *Altamira* 1/II-52 (I) y 53, Vázquez a Felipe, con respuestas, ambas fechadas el 4 de julio de 1584. <<

[719] BL *Addl.* 28,362/1, Barajas a Vázquez, 1 de enero de 1584. <<

[720] BAV, UL 1115/108-109, aviso de Madrid, 10 de enero de 1587; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, p. 1172. <<

[721] Martínez Millán y Fernández Conti, *La Monarquía*, p. 318, citando relaciones contemporáneas. <<

[722] BL *Addl.* 28,361/110, borrador corregido de la *Pragmática*, 11 de septiembre de 1586. <<

[723] IVdeDJ 55/XI/153, Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 10 de agosto de 1588; AHN *Inq* libro 100/551, Juan Ruiz de Velasco

a Vázquez, 23 de agosto de 1588; IVdeDJ 21/740. <<

[724] IVdeDJ 21/740 y 374, notas escritas por Felipe y Vázquez en una carta del general de los Jerónimos, 12 de septiembre de 1589, y Jerónimo Gassol a Felipe, y respuesta, 8 de julio de 1591. <<

[725] BNE Ms 18.718 n.º 55, fols. 97r-108v, «Papel a Philippo II» de don Luis Manrique, s. f. (pero 1577). <<

[726] Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado*, II, pp. 117-119, Sixto a Felipe, 6 de agosto de 1586 (citando el Éxodo 18: 13-23.) <<

[727] Riba, p. 51, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 24 de julio de 1576; AHN *Inq* libro 100/244, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 15 de agosto de 1576. <<

[728] IVdeDJ 51/175 y BZ 142/6, Vázquez a Felipe y rescriptos, 29 de diciembre de 1577 y 4 de noviembre de 1580. <<

[729] Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 536, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, s. f. (pero 1577); BZ 80/540, Memorial de Francisco de Mendoza a Felipe con rescripto, Nápoles, 22 de diciembre de 1588. <<

[730] González Dávila, *Teatro,* pp. 369-370, doctor Hernández de Liévana a Felipe, otoño de 1572 (por fin, el rey eligió a don Diego de Covarrubias, obispo de Segovia); BL *Addl.* 28,263/107-110, Vázquez a Felipe, junto con la lista y rescripto, 23 de abril de 1577 (publicado con algunos errores en Riba, *Vida*, pp. 105-107). <<

[731] IVdeDJ 62/853, Felipe a Vázquez, 23 de marzo de 1575; BL *Addl.* 28,263/213-214, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 20 de febrero de 1579. <<

[732] *CODOIN*, LVI, pp. 293-294, Pazos a Felipe y rescripto, 29 de febrero de 1580. En 1577 el rey había arrestado y encarcelado al duque de Feria sin proceso. <<

[733] Morel-Fatio, «La Vie», VII, pp. 235 y 251. <<

[734] HSA, *Altamira*, 1/I/44 y 45, Medina Sidonia al rey y a Vázquez, 29 de febrero de 1588, e *idem*, 1/I/47a-b, Vázquez al rey, 8 de marzo de 1588, con rescripto real. <<

[735] HSA, *Altamira*, 6/I/13, el duque de Sesa a Gassol, 9 de octubre de 1589, comentario de Gassol; Pérez, *Relaciones*; Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*. <<

[736] Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 227, Chaves a Mateo Vázquez, marzo de 1586. <<

[737] Hernando Sánchez, «Estar en nuestro lugar», p. 286 n.º 230, Felipe a don Juan de Zúñiga, virrey de Nápoles, 4 de octubre de 1579; Encinas, II, pp. 311-315. <<

[738] Schäfer, *El Consejo Real,* I, pp. 149-150. Para otros ejemplos de la vigilancia del rey, véase el capítulo 4. <<

[739] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia,* III, p. 1397. <<

[740] BL *Eg.* 1506/92-93 y 94, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 15 y 19 de noviembre de 1578. <<

[741] BL *Eg.* 1506/20, Quiroga a Felipe y rescripto, 17 de marzo de 1574; AHN *Inq* Libro 101/226 y 208, consultas de la Suprema, 23 y 24 de noviembre de 1592, con rescriptos. <<

[742] BZ 142/201, Vázquez a Felipe, 22 de enero de 1587; AGP 3/164v-166 y 274, cédulas fechadas el 22 de diciembre de 1569 y 18 de octubre de 1571. Véase también un caso similar, estudiado en profundidad por Owens, *«By my absolute royal authority»*, cap. 7. <<

[743] AGS *CSR* 275/2 fols. 60, 74 y 87-88, cédulas de 1569. <<

[744] Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia general*, II, pp. 46-47; Las Heras, «Indultos», pp. 129-130; Velázquez, *La entrada*, fols. 79-81. <<

[745] Arrieta Alberti, «Gobernar rescribiendo», p. 93, consulta del Consejo de Aragón y rescripto, 16 de julio de 1588; IVdeDJ 21/586, Felipe a Diego de Covarrubias, 14 de

diciembre de 1575. <<

[746] AGS, PR 29/35, codicilo firmado por Felipe, Gante, 5 de agosto de 1559. <<

[747] AGS, PR 26/143, poder a Ruy Gómez y al duque de Alburquerque, Londres, 13 de abril de 1557; Muro, *Vida*, pp. 198-200, Felipe a la princesa, 8 de noviembre de 1582. <<

[748] AHN *Inq* libro 249/550v-551, real cédula para Juan Sánchez, 30 de mayo de 1589, copia de registro. Dicho volumen contiene centenares de cédulas parecidas. <<

[749] ASMa, AG 598, s. fol., Lepido Agnello al duque de Mantua, 8 de junio de 1580; IVdeDJ 21/148-157, correspondencia de Vázquez con Felipe, enero-marzo de 1583; *CSPV*, VIII, p. 174, Gradenigo y Lippomano al dogo y al Senado, 25 de junio de 1586. <<

[750] Sigüenza, p. 76; Muro, *Vida*, apéndice 12, Esteban de Ibarra a Mateo Vázquez, s. f. (pero abril de 1578). <<

[751] Íñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, sermón del doctor Aguilar de Terrones, fol. 7. <<

[752] Porreño, *Dichos*, p. 74; Jorzick, *Herrschaftssymbolik und Staat*, pp. 47-48, Felipe al virrey de Perú, 1573. <<

[753] Jorzick, *Herrschaftssymbolik und Staat*, p. 62, n.º 39, memorial a Felipe, 2 de noviembre de 1593. <<

[754] NA SP 70/6 fol. 15, Challoner a Isabel, 3 de agosto de 1559, borrador; *As Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1964, vol. IV (gav. XV, maços 1-15), Francisco Pereira a la reina Catalina, 2 de abril de 1565; *DHME*, IV, 4 (Sepúlveda, «Historia»); Cock, *Relación*, pp. 47 y 52. <<

[755] Santullano, *Obras completas de Teresa de Jesús*, p. 1394, Teresa a doña Inés Nieto, 1576-1577; Donà, pp. 75-78, carta a Venecia, 1 de septiembre de 1570; Íñiguez de Lequerica,

Sermones funerales, sermón de Terrones, fol. 12. <<

[756] FCDM, AH R7-23, Felipe a Feria, 21 de marzo de 1559; AHN *Inq* libro 100/243, 242, 178 y 294, Felipe a Quiroga, 16 de febrero, 26 de julio, 22 de septiembre y octubre de 1576; AHN *Inq* libro 101/325, consulta de la Suprema y rescripto, 11 de enero de 1592; *ibid*., fol. 695, rescripto de Felipe al licenciado Arenillas, 4 de diciembre de 1594, todas ológrafas. Cursiva añadida. <<

[757] Donà, p. 340, carta a Venecia, 1 de agosto de 1571. <<

[758] UB Leiden *Hs Pap* 3/3, Alonso de Laloo al conde de Hornes, 31 de agosto de 1566; Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, p. 670, relación de Leonardo Donà, enero de 1574. <<

[759] BL *Addl.* 28,264/26-27, Felipe a Manuel Filiberto, 9 de agosto de 1557, original cifrado, con posdata ológrafa; *CODOIN*, XCVIII, p. 483, Felipe al conde de Luna, 8 de agosto de 1563; *CODOIN*, XXXV, p. 61, Felipe a Alba, Badajoz, 2 de agosto de 1580, posdata ológrafa; AGS *Estado K* 1448/197, Felipe a don Bernardino de Mendoza, 28 de julio de 1588. <<

[760] *CODOIN*, XXXV, p. 61, Felipe a Alba, 2 de agosto de 1580, posdata ológrafa; AGS, *CJH* 324/27, «Gastos secretos» de Mendoza mientras fue embajador en Inglaterra en agosto de 1578. <<

[761] AHN *AEESS* 11/28, Felipe al duque de Sessa, 5 de febrero de 1592; AGS, *Secretaría* 61/26, Consejo a Ayala, 7 de julio de 1586. <<

[762] Ugolini, «Le comunicazioni postali», p. 321. <<

[763] Douais, II, pp. 127-128 y 142, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, con aviso, 31 de octubre de 1569. <<

[764] *GPGP*, II, p. 557, Felipe a Pérez, s. f. (pero 4 de octubre de 1565). <<

[765] Woltjer, *Friesland*, p. 3, el conde de Aremberg a Margarita

de Parma, 15 de septiembre de 1566. <<

[766] AGS *Estado K* 1490/50, Felipe a Saboya, 26 de julio de 1557, ológrafa; AA, 5/69, Felipe a Alba, Madrid, 7 de agosto de 1567, ológrafa; AGS *Estado* 561/122, Felipe a Requesens, 22 de octubre de 1574, minuta. <<

[767] *BMO*, III, pp. 1225 y 1274, Felipe a Santa Cruz, 21 y 10 de octubre de 1587. <<

[768] Watts, «Friction in future war», 91; y Jablonsky, *The owl of Minerva,* 33-36. <<

[769] *BMO*, I, p. 478, Olivares a Felipe, 4 de junio de 1585, con decreto. <<

[770] *Ibid*., p. 496 y AGS *Estado* 946/229, Felipe a Olivares, 2 y 22 de agosto de 1585. <<

[771] OÖLA, KB 4/137, Khevenhüller a Rodolfo II, 13 de octubre de 1585; BR Ms II-1670/180, Felipe al licenciado Antolínez, 31 de octubre de 1585. <<

[772] Villari y Parker, *La política de Felipe II,* pp. 110-115, Zúñiga a Felipe, s. f. (pero finales de 1585). <<

[773] *CCG*, XII, pp. 133-135, Granvela a Carlos de Mansfelt, 29 de noviembre de 1585. <<

[774] IVdeDJ 23/385, Castro a Hernando de Vega, presidente del Consejo de Indias, Sevilla, 15 de noviembre de 1585, junto con la consulta del Consejo de Indias a Felipe, de 30 de noviembre de 1585, con rescripto real. <<

[775] *BMO*, I, pp. 536-537, «Lo que se responde a Su Santidad», s. f. (pero 24 de octubre de 1585). <<

[776] *Ibid*., pp. 564-567, Santa Cruz a Felipe, 13 de febrero de 1586, y Felipe y Idiáquez a Santa Cruz, 26 de febrero de 1586 (y no «enero», como dice el volumen). <<

[777] ASC Ms 11/18, 1.er cuaderno, Felipe a Santa Cruz, 20 de abril de 1586. <<

[778] *BMO*, II, pp. 108-111, Parma a Felipe, 20 de abril de 1586, y II, pp. 195-196, «Lo que dixo Juan Bautista Piata». <<

[779] HSA *Altamira* 7/II-24 «Memoria de algunas de las cosas que se han avisado passan estos días en Madrid», Mateo Vázquez, en El Escorial, a Barajas, en Madrid, s. f. (pero con respuesta de Barajas fechada el 8 de julio de 1586). <<

[780] *BMO*, II, p. 212, «Parecer» de don Juan de Zúñiga (junio-julio de 1586). Tras la muerte de su padre, en septiembre de 1586, Alejandro Farnesio se convirtió en duque de Parma. <<

[781] Heredia Herrera, *Catálogo*, I, p. 597, consulta del Consejo de Indias, 3 de septiembre de 1586, con decreto; *APO*, III, pp. 130-131, Felipe al virrey Duarte de Meneses, 23 de febrero y 14 de marzo de 1588. <<

[782] *BMO*, II, pp. 305-307, don Bernardino de Mendoza a Felipe, 13 de agosto de 1586 (con abundantes apostillas reales) y 338-339, respuesta de Felipe, 5 de septiembre de 1586. <<

[783] BL *Addl.* 28,363/116, Juan Ruiz de Velasco a Mateo Vázquez, 20 de junio de 1587; BL *Addl.* 28,376/336, Andrés de Prada a Idiáquez, 17 de mayo de 1587. <<

[784] *BMO*, III, pp. 1967-1968, Felipe a Santa Cruz, 14 de septiembre de 1587. <<

[785] *Ibid.*, pp. 1006-1007, Felipe a Parma, 4 de septiembre de 1587. A pesar de la diferencia de diez días en las fechas, este documento fue redactado al mismo tiempo que la Instrucción para Santa Cruz del día 14 (véase nota anterior). <<

[786] *Ibid.*, pp. 1069-1070, Felipe a Parma, 14 de septiembre de 1587. <<

[787] *Ibid.*, pp. 1225 y 1274, Felipe a Santa Cruz, 10 y 21 de octubre de 1587. <<

[788] ASVe *SDS* 20, s. fol., Lippomano a Venecia, 14 de noviembre de 1587, con copia adjunta de la carta de Santa

Cruz del día 4. <<

[789] BZ 141/160, Felipe al conde de Barajas, 18 de junio de 1588, copia. <<

[790] OÖLA, KB 4/311-312, Khevenhüller a Rodolfo II, 13 de julio de 1588. <<

[791] Maura, pp. 258-261, Medina Sidonia a Felipe, 24 de junio de 1588, repitiendo lo que había dicho en febrero (en una carta que todavía no se ha hallado). <<

[792] Oria, p. 152, Idiáquez y Moura a Medina Sidonia, 22 de febrero de 1588. <<

[793] KML, *MSP: CR* 5/82, Felipe a Medina Sidonia, 11 de marzo de 1588. Véase capítulo 16 sobre el chantaje experimentado por el duque. <<

[794] *BMO*, III, p. 1964, Bertendona a Felipe, 15 de febrero de 1588. <<

[795] BZ 142/171A, discurso de Felipe a las Cortes, enero de 1588, ológrafo; Oria, pp. 148-149, Moura e Idiáquez a Medina Sidonia, 20 de febrero de 1588. <<

[796] Duro, II, pp. 9-10, Instrucción de Felipe a Medina Sidonia, 1 de abril de 1588, minuta. <<

[797] Maura, pp. 258-261, Medina Sidonia a Felipe, 21 y 24 de junio de 1588. <<

[798] BZ 143/97 y 111, Felipe a Vázquez, 18 y 28 de junio de 1588. <<

[799] Oria, pp. 210-214, Felipe a Medina Sidonia, 1 de julio de 1588. <<

[800] AGS *Estado* 455/320-321, Medina a Parma, 10 de junio de 1588, copia enviada a Felipe (y comentada por él). <<

[801] Canestrini y Desjardins, *Négociations,* IV, p. 737, Filippo Cavriana al gobierno de Toscana, París, 22 de noviembre de 1587; Laughton, I, pp. 358-362, Hawkins a Walsingham, 10

de agosto de 1588 NS; AGS *Estado* 595/32, Idiáquez a Felipe y respuesta, agosto de 1588. <<

[802] Van Meteren, *Historie*, libro 15. <<

[803] Parker, «No sé si vinieron estos», p. 14, don Alonso de Leyva a Juan Martínez de Recalde, 12 de agosto de 1588. <<

[804] AGS *Estado* 2219/84 y 87, Felipe a Parma y Medina Sidonia, 31 de agosto 1588; *idem,* fols. 85-86, «Apuntamiento en materia de armada que Su Magestad mandó hazer para que se considere y resuelva entre el duque de Parma, su sobrino, y el duque de Medina Sidonia»; y fol. 91, notas de Idiáquez fechadas el 15 de septiembre de 1588. <<

[805] AGS *Estado* 2219/87, Felipe a Parma, 31 de agosto de 1588, minuta. <<

[806] IVdeDJ 51/190, Vázquez a Felipe, 4 de septiembre de 1588, y contestación. <<

[807] Parker, «Testamento político», p. 15, apostilla real escrita en la carta de Martín de Idiáquez, octubre de 1588; BZ 145/76, Mateo Vázquez a Felipe y respuesta, 10 de noviembre de 1588. <<

[808] ASV NS 34/415-418 y 583-585, Novara a Montalto, 6 de julio y 8 de noviembre de 1588. <<

[809] *DHME*, IV, 59, «Historia»; Sigüenza, 120. <<

[810] *MHSI,* LX: *Ribadeneira*, II, pp. 105-111, Ribadeneira a Juan de Idiáquez, s. f. (pero otoño de 1588). <<

[811] Ungerer, «La defensa», publicó una edición comentada de los cargos presentados contra Pérez en Madrid el 12 de junio de 1584 y los descargos firmados por este seis días más tarde; citas en las pp. 100-104 y 148-149. <<

[812] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 57-59, Enríquez a Felipe, 16 de agosto 1584. <<

[813] AGS *CJH* 248/21/2, petición de Pérez a Felipe, 25 de

agosto de 1587, con decreto. <<

[814] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 116-126, declaración de Antonio Enríquez, Monzón, 30 de junio de 1585; AHPM, tomo 1104/1364-1414, «escriptura» fechada el 20 de mayo de 1588 acerca de la almoneda en 1585. <<

[815] Marañón, *Los procesos*, p. 185, testimonio del conde de Barajas, presidente del Consejo Real, 21 de septiembre de 1589. <<

[816] AGS *CJH* 248/21/2, petición de Pérez a Felipe, 25 de agosto de 1587; Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 148-151, petición de Pedro de Escobedo contra Pérez y Diego Martínez por asesinato, 2 de septiembre de 1587. <<

[817] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 32-34, comisión a Rodrigo Vázquez, 1588, s. f. (pero supuestamente poco antes de la primera interrogación de Pérez, el 30 de agosto). <<

[818] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 195-198, Chaves a Pérez, El Escorial, 5 y 18 de septiembre de 1589, copias notariales; González Palencia, *Fragmentos*, 71, «Escrituras de concierto entre Antonio Pérez y Pedro [de] Escobedo», 29 de septiembre de 1589. Sobre el papel sospechoso de Chaves, véase Martínez Peñas, *El confesor*, pp. 327-341. <<

[819] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 199-200, orden de Felipe a Rodrigo Vázquez, y de este a los alguaciles, e interrogatorio a Pérez, todos del 21 de diciembre de 1589. <<

[820] *Ibid*., pp. 258-259, auto de los jueces, 14 de mayo de 1590. <<

[821] *CODOIN*, LVI, pp. 454 y 466, parte del relato notarial del estricto arresto de la princesa. <<

[822] Marañón, *Los procesos*, pp. 197-198, Chaves a Pérez, 18 de septiembre de 1589, copia notarial. <<

[823] Pizarro Llorente, *Un gran patrón*, p. 362. <<

[824] AGS *Estado* 2851, s. fol., «Lo que se platicó en el Consejo de Estado a 12 de noviembre 1588», y consulta del 26 de noviembre de 1588 con decreto. <<

[825] *ACC*, X, pp. 233-243, actas del 22, 23 y 30 de agosto de 1588 (véase también un borrador del memorial de Felipe en IVdeDJ 45/348). <<

[826] *ACC*, X, pp. 348-349, actas del 7 de diciembre de 1588. <<

[827] *Ibid.*, pp. 397-398 y 422-423, actas del 8 de febrero de 1589. <<

[828] BZ 143/203, propuesta de Juan Vázquez a la Junta de Cortes, 23 de junio de 1589; Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana, *Bertendona Papers*, n.º 21, Felipe a Bertendona, 23 de junio de 1589. <<

[829] AGS *Estado* 2219/197, Felipe a Parma, 7 de septiembre de 1589. <<

[830] IVdeDJ 45/452 y 51/1, Vázquez a Felipe y rescripto, 5 y 8 de febrero de 1591. <<

[831] Bouza Álvarez, «Corte y protesta», pp. 21-22, el bando de policía del 29 de enero de 1591, y 30-31, confesión de Juan de Soria, un tornero de 32 años. <<

[832] Pidal, *Alteraciones de Aragón*, II, p. 44, carta del conde de Chinchón. <<

[833] Luna, *Comentarios*, pp. 29-30, publica el cartel. <<

[834] Ruiz, *A King*, p. 156. <<

[835] *CODOIN*, XV, pp. 464-465, «Declaración de Diego de Bustamante», enero de 1591. <<

[836] *CODOIN*, XII, pp. 33-35, Consejo de Aragón a Felipe y rescripto, 17 de julio de 1590. <<

[837] BL *Eg.* 1508/215-218, «Relación de las causas y procesos de las personas que fueron condenadas», pruebas contra Tomás de Rueda y Nicolás Blanco, quemados por su participación en el

alboroto del 24 de mayo de 1591. <<

[838] *CODOIN*, XII, p. 269, fray Agustín Labata a fray Andrés de Sanmillán, 20 de julio de 1591; *CODOIN*, XV, p. 499, conde de Morata al conde de Chinchón, Zaragoza, 21 de agosto de 1591 (cursiva añadida). <<

[839] Luna, *Comentarios*, p. 178, Gandía a Idiáquez, s. f. (pero verano de 1591); Lovett, «Philip II, Antonio Pérez», 141, Junta Grande del 25 de julio de 1591; AHN *Inq* libro 101/226 y 208, consultas de la Suprema, 23 y 24 de noviembre de 1592, con rescriptos reales fechados el 7 de diciembre. <<

[840] Lovett, «Philip II, Antonio Pérez», p. 152, Junta Grande del 31 de julio de 1591, y rescripto; BL *Eg.* 1508/215-218, «Relación de las causas y procesos de las personas que fueron condenadas», evidencia contra Andrés de Naya, quemado vivo por su participación en el alboroto del 24 de septiembre de 1591. <<

[841] Pidal, *Historia*, II, p. 201, Felipe a las universidades, 15 de octubre de 1591, y p. 233, a los diputados, 2 de noviembre de 1591. <<

[842] AHN *Inq* libro 101/339 y 324-325, consultas del 2, 9 y 11 de enero de 1592 y rescriptos. <<

[843] ACP, *Bobadilla* B-7a, Bobadilla a Chinchón, 1 de marzo de 1592, con respuesta del 10 de marzo. <<

[844] Gracia Rivas, *La «Invasión»*, pp. 157-158 y 165, Bobadilla a Felipe y a Chinchón, 18 de marzo de 1592. <<

[845] ACP, *Bobadilla* B-7a, Bobadilla a Chinchón, 9 de mayo de 1592. <<

[846] AHN *Inq* libro 101/308, 283 y 264, Consulta de la Junta de Aragón y rescriptos, 29 de abril, 18 de junio y 9 de agosto de 1592; BL *Eg.* 1506/180 y 186, la Suprema a Felipe y rescriptos, 31 de octubre y 7 de noviembre de 1592. <<

[847] Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, pp. 666-670, narra el arresto, encarcelamiento y muertes misteriosas tanto del conde de Aranda como del duque de Villahermosa; las citas corresponden a los *Comentarios* del conde de Luna y a la *Historia apologética* de Céspedes y Meneses. <<

[848] AHN *Inq* libro 101/233, consulta de la Suprema, 7 de noviembre de 1592, y rescripto real. <<

[849] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, p. 204. <<

[850] AHN *Inq* libro 101/226 y 208, consultas de la Suprema, 23 y 24 de noviembre de 1592, con rescriptos reales fechados el 7 de diciembre. <<

[851] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, pp. 208-210 (183 leguas). <<

[852] Herrera, *Historia General*, III, p. 291; Bouza Álvarez, «Servidumbres», p. 166, Velada al conde de Benavente, San Lorenzo, 25 de julio de 1590, y p. 174, refrán citado por Gaspare Silingardi en 1595. <<

[853] Longlée, p. 272, a Enrique III, 19 de julio de 1586; Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, p. 152, Felipe a Catalina, 2 de julio de 1587. <<

[854] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 154-155, Felipe a Catalina, 12 de marzo de 1588; Longlée, p. 367, a Enrique III, 30 de abril de 1588; BAV UL 1115/112, aviso de Madrid, 7 de febrero de 1587. <<

[855] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, pp. 251-252. <<

[856] BL *Addl.* 28,263/560-561, Vázquez a Felipe, 6 de abril de 1591 y rescripto; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, p. 139, Caetani a Aldobrandini, 20 de octubre de 1594. <<

[857] Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 44-45 y 168-169, del mismo al mismo, 8 y 16 de julio de 1596. <<

[858] Pérez Mínguez, *Psicología*, pp. 356-357, Gassol a Felipe y rescripto, 29 de septiembre de 1593. <<

[859] Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia*, III, pp. 1486-8, «La orden que se ha de guardar en la Junta que ahora he ordenado», San Lorenzo, 26 de septiembre de 1593; Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada*, pp. 320-324. <<

[860] IVdeDJ 21/404, Felipe a Moura, 29 de octubre de 1594. <<

[861] Feros, «El viejo monarca», ofrece la mejor versión de cómo gobernó Felipe en sus últimos años. <<

[862] AGS *Estado* 176, s. fol., Felipe a don Martín de Padilla, conde de Santa Gadea, 3 de octubre de 1596. <<

[863] BL *Addl.* 20,929/104, Silva a Felipe III, abril de 1599. <<

[864] *ACC*, XII, pp. 372-377, «Discurso» de Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce, 23 de febrero de 1593; *ibid.*, XVI, pp. 166-167, Juan Vázquez de Salazar a Felipe, 28 de abril de 1593. <<

[865] *ACC*, XII, p. 456, procurador de Sevilla, 19 de mayo de 1593; *ibid.*, XVI, p. 170, procurador de Burgos, resumido por Juan Vázquez, 6 de mayo de 1593. <<

[866] *ACC*, XVI, pp. 169 y 173, Felipe a Juan Vázquez, 28 de abril y 6 de mayo de 1593. <<

[867] *Ibid.*, pp. 195-197, Felipe a Juan Vázquez, 23 de julio de 1593; Jago, «Tributos y cultura política», pp. 86-91. <<

[868] Thompson, «Oposición política», p. 45, Poza a Moura, 4 de abril de 1596. <<

[869] Céspedes del Castillo, «La defensa», p. 403. <<

[870] *ACC*, XVI, pp. 415-417, y XV, pp. 45-46, Felipe a las Cortes, 5 de julio de 1596. <<

[871] *ACC*, XV, pp. 80-85, y XVI, pp. 468-80, acuerdo del 29 de julio de 1596; Thompson, «Oposición política», p. 56, respuesta de Felipe, 27 de agosto de 1596. <<

[872] BL *Addl.* 28,378/69-73v y 75-76, Poza a Moura, 9 y 13 de junio de 1596. <<

[873] BL *Addl.* 28,378/128-131, Poza a Moura y respuesta, 28-31 de julio de 1596; Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 285, «Relación y tanteo de lo que Su Magestad deve»; Drelichman y Voth, *Lending to the Borrower from Hell*. <<

[874] Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, p. 183, Caetani a Aldobrandino, 30 de noviembre de 1596; RAG AB 604, Alberto al conde Frederick van den Berg, Arras, 21 de octubre de 1597. Compárense sus efectos negativos con los del decreto de 1575 sobre la guerra en los Países Bajos (capítulos 12 y 13). <<

[875] *ACC*, XV, pp. 272-3, Felipe a las Cortes, 28 de noviembre de 1596. <<

[876] BL *Addl.* 28,378/41-48v, rescripto de Moura a Poza, 15 de mayo de 1596. <<

[877] Casey, «Spain: a failed transition», pp. 214 y 211. <<

[878] Bouza Álvarez, «De las Alteraciones», p. 93, Antonio Varela a don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, 28 de noviembre de 1597. <<

[879] HSA *Altamira* 18/IV/3c, Yepes a Felipe, 1 de julio de 1597; y 12/I/1, n.º 13, Yepes a Moura, 17 de mayo de 1598. <<

[880] Rodríguez-Salgado, «"Ni cerrando ni abriendo la puerta"», pp. 645 y 656, Felipe a Alberto, 29 de julio de 1596 y 13 de abril de 1598. <<

[881] Tellechea Idígoras, *El Papado*, II, pp. 258-264, Clemente VIII al príncipe Felipe y a Alberto e Isabel, todas del 12 de abril de 1597. <<

[882] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, pp. 154-155 y 165, Felipe a Catalina, 12 de marzo de 1588 (Catalina se había casado el 11 de marzo de 1585), y 6 de julio de 1589; *DHME*, IV, 181-183 (*Historia* de Sepúlveda). <<

[883] AGS K 1567/64, don Bernardino de Mendoza a don

Martín de Idiáquez, 14 de abril de 1588. <<

[884] AGS PR 29/47, «Papel de Su Magestad Católica, que aya gloria, declarando que es su voluntad», s. f. (pero marzo de 1594). <<

[885] González Dávila, *Historia*, pp. 17-18, Zúñiga a Felipe, 1585. <<

[886] Martínez Millán y Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 224, el obispo de Guadix a Mateo Vázquez, 15 de marzo de 1586. <<

[887] ACA *CA* 36/325, consulta del Consejo de Aragón, 25 de marzo de 1594; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 221 y 213, Caetani a Aldobrandini, 10 de septiembre y 22 de enero de 1597; Danvila y Burguero, *Don Cristóbal*, p. 701, don Juan de Silva a Moura, enero de 1599. <<

[888] González Dávila, *Historia*, pp. 26-30; Atarés, «Consejos instructivos», pp. 170-172. <<

[889] Cervera, *Testamento auténtico*, pp. 109-116. <<

[890] AGS PR 29/37, «Papel de Su Magestad Cathólica, que aya gloria, hecho a 5 de agosto de 1598». En *FBD*, apéndice II, doy las razones por las que considero que este debe ser «el otro papel de aviso» que Felipe entregó a su hijo. <<

[891] Martínez Hernández, *El marqués*, p. 344 n.º 126, Velada al archiduque Alberto, 6 de julio de 1597; Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, p. 307. <<

[892] Feros, *El duque de Lerma*, p. 110, el duque de Feria a Thomas Fitzherbert, 28 de febrero de 1597 y 1 de junio de 1598; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, p. 256, aviso de Madrid, 11 de julio de 1598. <<

[893] Martínez Hernández, *El marqués*, pp. 354-355, Velada a Juan de Sosa, 10 de septiembre de 1598. <<

[894] Eire, *From Madrid*, p. 269, citando a Pérez de Herrera, *Elogio*; Sigüenza, p. 167; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 255-

256, aviso de Madrid, 11 de julio de 1598. <<

[895] Vargas-Hidalgo, «Documentos», p. 410. <<

[896] Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 97 y 264-267, Caetani a Aldobrandini, El Escorial, 17 de agosto de 1598, el mismo día que la audiencia; AGS PR 29/39, «Papel de Su Magestad», 19 de agosto de 1598. <<

[897] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, pp. 402-404. <<

[898] Sigüenza, p. 177; Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, p. 408; Eire, *From Madrid*, pp. 322-347. <<

[899] Sigüenza, p. 180. <<

[900] Lhermite, *Pasatiempos*, p. 405; Sigüenza, p. 189. <<

[901] Sigüenza, p. 189. <<

[902] Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio auténtico*, p. 134; *Glorias efímeras* reproduce los trece lienzos del funeral que han sobrevivido, expuestos en Florencia. <<

[903] BR Ms II-2214/68, Juan Ramírez Freile a don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, 12 de septiembre de 1598; Fernández Álvarez, *Madrid bajo Felipe II*, acta del 13 de septiembre de 1598. <<

[904] Eire, *From Madrid to purgatory*, pp. 257 y 300-301; Vargas-Hidalgo, «Documentos inéditos», pp. 454-460, enumera cuarenta y una obras; Redonet, «Honras», describe varias conmemoraciones urbanas. BNE Ms 6585, incluye diecisiete folios de poemas sobre la muerte de Felipe II; BR Ms II-2459, «Justas poéticas celebradas en Salamanca», ciento dieciocho folios, contiene muchos más. Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, más tarde conde de Gondomar, adquirió probablemente ambas colecciones de *ephemera* de su magnífica biblioteca: véase la descripción en *Catálogo de la Real Biblioteca. XI. Manuscritos II*, págs. 481-487. <<

[905] AM, Palencia «Libro de Acuerdos, 1595-1600», fols. 362-

363, acuerdo del 25 de septiembre de 1598. <<

[906] AM, Cádiz Ms. 10.001, «Libro de Acuerdos 1596-1599», fols. 127-135v y 142-144v, acuerdos del 22 de septiembre; 8, 19 y 26 de octubre; y 23 y 27 de noviembre de 1598. <<

[907] García Bernal, «Las exequias», pp. 117-118, acuerdo del 17 de septiembre de 1598; Cervantes Saavedra, «Al túmulo del rey Felipe II en Sevilla». <<

[908] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Poesías completas,* ed. V. Gaos, Madrid, 1981, II, págs. 378-379. Cervera, *Testimonio* (publicado a principios de 1599), no solo dedicó una sección completa a la descripción de las «cámaras», «dysenteria» y «diarrhea» que padeció Felipe durante su enfermedad final (pp. 17-20), ¡sino que incluso incluyó dichos términos en su índice! <<

[909] Carvajal y Mendoza, *Epistolario*, 98, a Isabel de Velasco, 15 de septiembre de 1598; AMAE (P) *MDFDE* 239/49-93v, Íñigo Ibáñez de Santa Cruz, «Las causas de que resultó el ignorante y confuso gobierno que hubo en el tiempo del Rey nuestro señor, que sea en gloria». Sobre esta curiosa obra, véase Feros, *El duque de Lerma*, 131-133. <<

[910] B. Álamos de Barrientos, *Discurso político al rey Felipe III al comienzo de su reinado*, ed. M. Sánchez, Madrid, 1990, pp. 27-28 y 31 (este breve tratado, aunque no se publicó hasta el siglo XIX, adquirió una gran difusión en forma manuscrita: existen cinco copias, dos de ellas atribuidas a Antonio Pérez, con quien Álamos de Barrientos había mantenido una estrecha relación). Véase también el notablemente similar y pesimista análisis llevado a cabo por el duque de Medina Sidonia a partir de 1598, el año en que este ingresó en el Consejo de Estado, publicado en Pierson, *Commander*, pp. 217-218. <<

[911] Íñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, fols. 85v-86, sermón de Ayala del 15 de noviembre de 1598; Mariana, *De*

rege, p. 359; González de Cellorigo, *Memorial*, p. 94. <<

[912] *CSPV*, IX, p. 346, Soranzo al dogo y al Senado, 27 de septiembre de 1598; AGS *Estado* 840/166, Padilla a Felipe III, 10 de diciembre de 1601; Kamen, «La imprudencia». <<

[913] Martínez Hernández, *El marqués*, p. 357, Velada a Juan de Sosa, 13 de septiembre de 1598; Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio*, p. 130. <<

[914] González Dávila, *Historia*, p. 48; Quevedo, *Obras*, II, p. 438b; Bouza Álvarez, «Felipe II sube», p. 305; Antigua, *Desengaño*, pp. 82-83 y 116-117 (libro III, capítulos 9 y 35). <<

[915] Daza, *Quarta parte*, pp. 266-267. <<

[916] *Ibid.*, p. 267 (obviamente la aritmética no era el punto fuerte de Daza: cinco años, no cuatro, eran los que separaban la muerte del rey en septiembre de 1598 y la visión de septiembre de 1603); y dedicatoria y pp. 137-138 (sobre Carlos). <<

[917] Íñiguez de Lequerica, *Sermones funerales*, sermón de Aguilar de Terrones, Madrid, 19 de octubre de 1598, fols. 16-17. (Porreño, *Dichos*, p. 21, cita parte de este sermón, pero la atribuye a fray Antonio de León.) <<

[918] Douais, I, p. 204, Fourquevaux a Carlos IX, 15 de abril de 1567. <<

[919] IVdeDJ 82/444 y 419, Sessa a Zúñiga, 28 de septiembre de 1600 y 9 de noviembre de 1602, ambas minutas. <<

[920] Ribadeneira, Vázquez, y los procuradores de Cortes, todos citados en los capítulos 18 y 19. <<

[921] Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*, pp. 105-107 y 286-888, «Juicio sobre Felipe II» por Camillo Caetani, Madrid, 13 de septiembre de 1598; Serrano, I, pp. 316-317, Felipe a Requesens, 12 de agosto de 1566; AGS *Estado* 2855, s. f., «Sumario de los quatro papeles principales que dio el presidente Richardot» y «Lo que Su Magestad es servido que se responda a

los quatro papeles» (11 de septiembre de 1589); Diego Pérez de Mesa, *Política o razón de Estado*, citado por Carlos Morales, *Felipe II*, p. 336. <<

[922] Kervijn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, VII, p. 397, Thomas Wilson a Walsingham, 27 de diciembre de 1574; IVdeDJ 44/61, rescripto de Felipe a Mateo Vázquez, 31 de mayo de 1575. <<

[923] Galende Díaz y Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, 238-241, María a Felipe, 13 de febrero de 1572. <<

[924] *CCG*, I, pp. 314-318, Granvela a Felipe, 19 de junio de 1566; AGS *Estado* 2843/7, consulta del Consejo de Estado, 5 de septiembre de 1577, votos del duque de Alba y del cardenal Quiroga. <<

[925] Levi, *Los hundidos y los salvados*, pp. 61-62. <<

[926] *BMO*, I, pp. 62-64, Felipe a Alba, 14 de septiembre de 1571. <<

[927] Herrera Oria, *La Armada*, pp. 210-214, Felipe a Medina Sidonia, 1 de julio de 1588; Raleigh, *A history*, p. 407. <<

[928] BL *Addl.* 28,336/76, el doctor Velasco a Espinosa, 9 de agosto de 1571. <<

[929] Elliott, «Felipe II y la monarquía española», pp. 43-44. <<

[930] IVdeDJ 61/325, Hoyo a Felipe y respuesta, s. f. (pero a principios de agosto de 1563); Cabié, *Ambassade*, pp. 432-433, «Notes diverses» por el embajador francés, octubre de 1566. <<

[931] AGNM *Mercedes* V/248-9v, Felipe a don Martín de Velasco, 2 de febrero de 1561; *BMO*, I, p. 64, Felipe a Alba, 14 de septiembre de 1571. <<

[932] *BMO*, III, p. 1274, Felipe al marqués de Santa Cruz, 21 de octubre de 1587. <<

[933] *Dalla Ragion di Stato* (1589) y *Relationi universali* (1591) de Giovanni Botero, citadas por Gil, «Visión europea», p. 79.

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[934] Sigüenza, p. 99; Eliot, *Ortho-epia Gallica*, pp. 44-45; los embajadores citados por Hillgarth, *The mirror*, p. 96. <<

[935] Sigüenza, pp. 408-411, un análisis impresionante del impacto económico de «el dinero que se ha gastado en esta fábrica». <<

[936] Mulcahy, *Philip II*, p. 312 n.º 2, marqués de Velada al conde de Benavente, El Escorial, 25 de noviembre de 1590. <<

[937] ASV, NS 19/192, Novara a Rusticucci, 3 de mayo de 1587; BCR Ms 2417/39, Silva a Esteban de Ibarra, 13 de agosto de 1589. <<

[938] Mercedes Noviembre, su genial organizadora, publicó una breve historia, *La Biblioteca de Francisco de Zabálburu*. Para más detalles, véase Llera Llorente, *La Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu*. <<

[939] Osma, *Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan*. Osma modeló el Instituto a imagen de la Hispanic Society of America, fundada en 1904 por Archer M. Huntington, con quien tenía una «amistosa rivalidad» por adquirir materiales: Proske, *Archer Milton Huntington*, pp. 16-17. De todos modos, es una curiosa coincidencia que dos personas, completamente desconocidas entre sí, acabasen adquiriendo una parte importante de la Colección Altamira. <<

[940] Gayangos, *Catalogue*; Micheli, *Inventaire* (un catálogo preparado según el modelo del que Gayangos preparó para la colección del British Museum). En cuanto a la historia europea de la colección, véase Andrés, «La dispersión». <<

[941] Agradezco a Mitchell Codding, John O'Neill y Patrick Lenaghan, de la Hispanic Society of America, la información, la ayuda con la catalogación y el estímulo en general en el «proyecto Altamira». Véase también Rodríguez-Moñino y Brey Mariño, *Catálogo*, III, pp. 12-52 (sobre Sancho Rayón), 53-106

(sobre el marqués de Jerez de los Caballeros) y 158 (el contrato de venta de la «biblioteca entera» del marqués, 15 de enero de 1902). Además, varios lugares (BR, AHN, the National Library of Scotland de Edimburgo y la Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo de Santander) atesoran distintos fragmentos de la Colección Altamira. <<

[942] Riba, *Correspondencia privada*, publicó la mitad del manuscrito BL *Addl.* 28,263. Aunque se titule «volumen 1», Riba falleció poco después de transcribir los materiales y no apareció ningún volumen más. <<

[943] Heredia Herrera, *Catálogo*, reproduce un análisis de más de cuatro mil consultas y el texto de todos los rescriptos de Felipe (el vol. I abarca el periodo 1529-1591, mientras que el vol. II corresponde a 1592-1599), pero únicamente aquellos conservados en el AGI, no en otras colecciones. <<

[944] BL *Eg.* 1506, uno de los siete volúmenes con documentos de la Inquisición adquiridos en 1856, contiene consultas del inquisidor general Gaspar de Quiroga a Felipe sobre una gran variedad de temas durante el periodo 1574-1595, con sus rescriptos ológrafos. <<

[945] AHN OM 3509-3512, titulado «Papeles curiosos», está repleto de documentos sobre los planes de Felipe para intervenir en Inglaterra y Francia. En mi opinión, deberían conservarse en el AGS *Estado*. <<

[946] AGS *Estado K*, los documentos del Consejo de Estado relativos a Francia volvieron de París en 1942, y han sido profusamente utilizados. En contraste, los documentos robados de otras series, ahora AGS *Estado* 8334-8343, apenas han sido aprovechados, a pesar de los dos catálogos detallados realizados mientras los documentos aún estaban en París: Daumet, «Inventaire», y Paz, *Catálogo*. AMAE (P) aún conserva fotocopias de todos los documentos devueltos, así como

numerosos originales que no regresaron. <<

[947] Para probar esta maravillosa herramienta, tecléese PARES [Portal de Archivos Españoles] en un explorador y elíjase la opción «Búsqueda sencilla». En el apartado «Buscar», tecléese «Felipe II»; en «Fechas», introdúzcase «1597» y «1598»; y selecciónese la opción «Registros digitalizados». La siguiente pantalla ofrece distintos «Archivos y fondos»; entre ellos, escójase «Archivo de Simancas, Patronato Real». Ocho de los 66 documentos mostrados son los últimos firmados por el rey, en agosto de 1598. Es posible leer e imprimir cada uno de ellos. <<

[948] HHStA *Hofkorrespondenz*, Karton 1 y 2, contiene cartas de Felipe y su hermana Juana a sus parientes Habsburgo; Galende Díaz y Salamanca López, *Epistolario*, publicaron las cartas ológrafas de María a su hermano conservadas en AA; BL *Addl.* 28,264 y AGS *Estado K* 1490 contienen las cartas ológrafas de Felipe al duque de Saboya en 1557-1558. Giovanna Altadonna, «Cartas», publicó 117 de sus cartas al duque Carlos Manuel de Saboya. <<

[949] FCDM AH 166 R7-20, Felipe a Feria, 7 de diciembre de 1558; Allinson, *A monarchy*, caps. 3 y 4; Rayne Allinson y Geoffrey Parker preparan una edición de los borradores de dos cartas de María para Felipe. <<

[950] Bouza Álvarez, *Cartas*, publicó 39 cartas escritas entre 1581 y 1585, sobre todo para sus dos hijas, y 94 dirigidas a Catalina en el periodo 1585-1596. Las cartas de Catalina reunidas en BL *Addl.* 28,419 permanecen inéditas. <<

[951] Bouza Álvarez, «Guardar papeles», investiga la historia y el tamaño de su archivo, e incluye el inventario de los 766 legajos y 54 libros que Zúñiga dejó a su muerte en 1586. <<

[952] March, *Niñez y juventud*, publicó numerosos documentos del Arxiu relativos a la educación de «Felipito». <<

[953] Los dos «Receuils de la correspondance de Granvelle», que recogen mensajes intercambiados entre 1579 y 1584 por el cardenal y Felipe II y sus consejeros más cercanos, estuvieron consignados como BRB MS 9471-2 y 9473 hasta 1979, pero en ese año pasaron a ser AGRB *Manuscrits Divers* 5459 y 5460, respectivamente. *CCG*, XII, publicó varios de esos documentos, pero con numerosos errores de transcripción. *PEG* y *CCG* sacaron a la luz la mayor parte de la correspondencia en BMB, aunque con una importante laguna entre los años 1564 y 1565. <<

[954] El magnífico *Epistolario del III duque de Alba* incluye muchas de las cartas escritas por el duque, pero no las que recibió. *CODOIN* IV y XXXVII recogen numerosas cartas del rey a Alba mientras este se hallaba en los Países Bajos; y *CODOIN* XXXII, XXXIII y XXXV incluyen muchos de los escritos durante la campaña de Portugal. AA, cajas 5-8, conserva la correspondencia del duque con Felipe, mientras que las cajas 26-56 albergan la intercambiada con otros, especialmente durante su periodo como gobernador general de los Países Bajos, y está clasificada por corresponsales en orden onomástico. <<

[955] Maura, *El designio*, publicó extractos de las cartas del rey que ahora se conservan en Santa Barbara. <<

[956] Véanse los detalles en Dierickx, «Les "Carte Farnesiane" de Naples». Afortunadamente, han sobrevivido muchos más papeles de Parma de los que se temía y pueden consultarse en ASN (aunque algunos tienen los bordes chamuscados). Las copias hechas por Gachard en ASN están ahora en AGRB *Collection Gachard* 565, 572 y 666. Léon van der Essen copió cartas de y sobre Felipe en sus «Cahiers». Varias de estas se encuentran hoy en los archivos de la Universidad de Louvain-la-Neuve, aunque otras siguen en colecciones privadas. <<

[957] Fernández Álvarez, *Testamento*, pp. 92-93. Sobre los tres billetes (Fernández, *Historia*, pp. 278-279; HSA *Altamira* 18/IV/3c y 12/I/1, n.º 13), véanse capítulos 5 y 19. <<

[958] Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, pp. 1040-1042, enumera las diferentes ediciones de la obra de Pérez, y profundiza en ellas en el capítulo 30. Alfredo Alvar Ezquerra publicó una versión crítica de la edición de *Relaciones y Cartas* impresa en 1598. *FBD*, apéndice I, explica por qué la veracidad de esta fuente es muy dudosa. <<

[959] Morel-Fatio, «La vie de don Luis de Requesens». <<

[960] Serrano y Sanz, *Autobiografía y memorias*, pp. 151-210. Véase también Lynn, *Between court and confesional*, capítulo 2. <<

[961] Tellechea Idígoras, *Fray Bartolomé Carranza*. <<

[962] París, *Négociations*; Cabié, *Ambassade*; Douais, *Dépêches*; Mousset, *Dépêches*; Brunetti y Vitale, *Corrispondenza*. <<

[963] *State Papers Online: the Tudors, 1509-1603, Part II*, proporciona no solo los *Calendars* en un formato que permite hacer búsquedas en ellos, sino también un vínculo al original digitalizado de cada documento que figura en ellos. <<

[964] Firpo, *Relazioni*, VIII, pp. 232-938; Serrano, *Correspondencia*; Voci, «L'impresa d'lnghilterra»; Mosconi, *La nunziatura di Spagna*; Tellechea Idígoras, *El ocaso*. <<

[965] Khevenhüller, *Diario*; Khevenhüller-Metsch y Probst-Ohstorff, *Hans Khevenhüller*. <<

[966] BNF Ms *f.f.* 16,104-16,108 reúne los despachos de St.-Gouard; IANTT *CG* libros 209 y 210 son los registros en que el propio Pereira copiaba su correspondencia. <<

[967] Más detalles en Kagan, *El rey recatado*. <<

[968] Kagan, «La historia», pp. 105-106, donde se cita el relato del propio Herrera sobre la audiencia, escrito en 1599. <<

[969] Orazio della Rena, *Compendio della vita di Filippo secondo re di Spagna* (BNF *Ms Italien* 446): véase Volpini, «D'un silence». <<

[970] Lhermite, *Los Pasatiempos*, pp. 155-156. <<

[971] Talbot, «Ore italiane»; Valente, *Un dramma*, 61, «Copia di una lettera». <<

Índice

El rey imprudente 3
Prefacio 6
Primera parte: El umbral del poder 15
1. Aprendizaje cortesano, 1527-1543 16
2. Un príncipe del Renacimiento, 1543-1551 50
3. Un imperio en transición, 1551-1558 71
Ilustración - La monarquía española en su apogeo 101
Ilustración - La familia de Carlos V 103
Ilustración - Libros adquiridos por Felipe II 105
Ilustración - Viaje de Felipe II a los Países Bajos 1588-1549 106
Ilustración - Viaje de Felipe II a los Países Bajos en 1549 108
Ilustración - Ejecuciones de herejes en Inglaterra 110
Segunda parte: El rey y su mundo 111
4. La mesa de Felipe II 112
5. El rey y su Dios 138
6. El rey se divierte 168
Ilustración - Las guerras de Felipe II 199
Ilustración - Los consejos de Felipe II 201
Ilustración - Las casas de campo de Felipe II 203
Tercera parte: La primera década del reinado 204
7. Toma de control, 1558-1561 205
8. «No terné en nada perder cien mill vidas si tantas

tubiesse»: la lucha por la fe, 1562-1567 236

9. El rey y su familia 265
10. El enigma de don Carlos 298
Ilustración - La familia de Felipe II 323
Ilustración - Don Carlos y sus antepasados 325
Ilustración - La limitada fertilidad de Felipe II 327
Cuarta parte: El rey vencedor 329
11. Años de cruzada, 1568-1572 330
12. Años de adversidad, 1573-1576 361
13. La crisis del reinado, 1576-1577 386
14. ¿Un rey asesino? 416
15. Años de triunfo, 1578-1585 443
16. «El monarca más poderoso de la cristiandad» 471
Ilustración - El coste de la guerra en dos frentes, 1571-1577 505
Ilustración - Solicitudes de copias de documentos recibidas por el Archivo de Simancas 507
Quinta parte: El rey vencido 509
17. La Empresa de Inglaterra, 1585-1588 510
18. Felipe acorralado, 1589-1592 541
19. Camino de la tumba y más allá, 1593-1603 567
Epílogo 601
Cronología 621
Abreviaturas utilizadas en este libro 643
Fuentes y bibliografía 650
Agradecimientos 697

Convenciones utilizadas en este libro 703
Listado de láminas e ilustraciones 705

Lámina 1 710
Lámina 2 711
Lámina 3 712
Lámina 4 713
Lámina 5 714
Lámina 6 715
Lámina 7 716
Lámina 8 717
Lámina 9 718
Lámina 10 719
Lámina 11 721
Lámina 12 723
Lámina 13 724
Lámina 14 725
Lámina 15 726
Lámina 16 727
Lámina 17 728
Lámina 18 729
Lámina 19 730
Lámina 20 731
Lámina 21 732
Lámina 22 733
Lámina 23 734
Lámina 24 735
Lámina 25 736

Lámina 26 737
Lámina 27 738
Lámina 28 739
Lámina 29 741
Lámina 30 742
Lámina 31 743
Lámina 32 744
Lámina 33 745
Lámina 34 746
Lámina 35 747
Lámina 36 748
Lámina 37 749
Lámina 38 750
Lámina 39 751
Lámina 40 752
Lámina 41 753
Lámina 42 754
Lámina 43 755
Lámina 44 756
Lámina 45 757
Autor 758
Notas 759